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# WILLIAM NAST BRODBECK

THE

MAN

AND

HIS

MINISTRY

(Bradbeck

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# WILLIAM NAST BRODBECK

## A MEMORIAL VOLUME

William Kast Broadbent

He was my friend. Before the closéd door
I stand, slow to believe that I no more
Shall press his hand. The days drag on to years,
With added sense of loss, and pain in store,
And grief doth overflow in bitter tears,
While steadfast Faith her loving comfort gives;
The converse sweet with him who is not here,
Is not a memory dead upon his bier,
But in the life beyond most surely lives;
I do not only say, "He *was* my friend,"
But looking calmly forward to the end,
When I shall also pass the opening door,
And grasp his hand with joy unknown before,
I wait in faith, and say, "He *is* my friend."

# SERMONS AND ADDRESSES

BY

WILLIAM NAST BRODBECK, D.D.

Late Pastor of Trinity Church, Charlestown, Mass.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY BISHOP W. F. MALLALIEU, D.D.
A PERSONAL TRIBUTE BY BISHOP R. S. FOSTER, D.D.
AND A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY HENRY TUCKLEY, D.D.

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EDITED BY CHARLES L. GOODELL

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A Memorial Volume

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# PREFACE.

ONLY Ulysses could bend Ulysses' bow. It required the voice and personality of William Nast Brodbeck to give full force to the words he spoke. The printed words of this memorial volume may seem to some quite ordinary, but those who heard him speak them will remember how great audiences were swayed by them and bore evidence to his power by smiles and tears and altered lives.

We regret that we are not able to publish some of his most effective sermons—such, for instance, as his great sermon on the "Office and Work of the Holy Spirit"—but these sermons were the result of years of study, and were so much a part of himself that he used no manuscript, and he has left no adequate notes.

The sermons and addresses selected were chosen because they were written in full and give a fair idea of his general method of sermonizing and show the bent of his mind in the choice of themes. They are not show sermons, but are such evidences of sturdy conviction and honest thought as we found at hand in his workshop after the master workman had been suddenly promoted. So unexpected was his call that he had no time to say a last word to

his friends or make any requests concerning the disposition of his effects, literary or otherwise.

In a few cases we have indicated where these sermons were delivered; others were spoken in many places East and West, and we have named no special occasion. The last address is but a fragment, but we have thought best to publish his notes as he left them, without amplification or comment. Some of his words are now singularly impressive.

The friends of Dr. Brodbeck are under great obligation to Henry Tuckley, D.D., of Trinity Church, Springfield, Mass., for the full and discriminating biography which forms so important a part of this book. Dr. Tuckley hesitated to undertake this work, but no man living was so well qualified by intimate acquaintance and loving sympathy. He has written *con amore*. Dr. Tuckley has selected for the most part the sermons here printed. Our thanks are especially due to Eaton & Mains for their kindness and help in the publication of this book. Every facility has been afforded us, and the work has been done with a dispatch almost unprecedented.

We pray God's blessing upon this memorial of our departed friend. We send it out with the hope that it may long proclaim the gospel which he loved to preach, and of whose power he was a conspicuous example.

C. L. Goodell.

Hanson Place Parsonage, Brooklyn, N. Y.

# INTRODUCTION.

CALLED home! Heaven is enriched, our hearts are made desolate. Called home! Angelic messengers and blood-washed hosts welcome our brother to the skies, while our tear-filled eyes follow his triumphant upward flight. Called home! Life's labors done, when as never before wide fields of usefulness were opening on every hand to his aspiring soul. Called home! He walks the streets of gold and wears his fadeless crown, we walk the rough hard ways of earth and bend beneath our burdens. Why could he not have lingered here, where he was so much needed? Why could not the Master wait for at least a score of years before he promoted this precious servant to higher ministries than those of earth?

"If we could push ajar the gates of life
And stand within, and all God's working see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.

"But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!
God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold.
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

"And if through patient toil we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loose, may rest,
When we shall clearly see and understand,
I think that we will say, 'God knew the best.'"

Surely we have our pilgrimage in a vale of tears, and our pathway is enshrouded by shadows that mortal vision may not penetrate. There are difficult questions which crowd upon us when one so much needed, so fully equipped, so dearly loved, so eminently useful, is cut down in the midst of his days. However dark the providence, however mysterious the problem, we will still cling trustingly to the hand of the Crucified, believing that we shall understand hereafter what now is so strange, so inexplicable.

William Nast Brodbeck was well born, for he was the son of pious parents, his father a German Methodist preacher, strong, sturdy, loyal, faithful; his mother was devotedly religious, a sweet, tender, patient, loving soul who filled her home with light and gladness. He resembled both of them.

In early life our brother did not look to the ministry as the field of his lifework. He had an ambition to become a lawyer, and he entered upon the studies necessary for that profession. He would have achieved success if he had followed his choice, for he had the qualities that would have given him great power with men, and which would have surely carried him to the front. More than likely he would have achieved political distinction in his own State and in the nation. He had gifts of natural leadership that few men possess, he had a commanding presence, there was an inspiration in his voice, there was the revelation of superb manhood in his form and features. Men would listen to what he had to say, and there was controlling

power in his thoughts. But God saw in him not a lawyer but a preacher of the Gospel; a chosen vessel; a messenger of life and salvation. He was not disobedient to the divine call which took possession of his soul, and which possessed his entire nature until the last hour of his mortal life.

Alike in his native State and in the Conference which he first joined, and in his adopted State and the New England Conference, his career was most successful. He never made a failure. If the church to which he was appointed was in the full tide of prosperity, his faith and work broadened and deepened the tide. If he were sent to a church that was in a cold, depressed, disheartened condition—Sunday school demoralized, class meetings neglected, social meetings scantily attended, finances at loose ends, benevolences uncared for—his zeal, enthusiasm and devotion in the shortest possible time would work a mighty change in all respects; and the routed, scattered forces would be reformed, and with a shout of faith they would be led to certain victory. If he were sent to a new field, where Methodism needed a wise master builder, right well did he know how to lay deep and broad and strong the foundations of the cause he loved better than he loved his life. Other congregations might call him to more lucrative, more comfortable, more prominent fields of labor, but he would not falter, no matter what the inducement. It will never be forgotten that when one of the most influential positions was offered to him—a position for which he was most thoroughly quali-

fied, a position that he might have filled with honor for many years, a position that would have made him prominent in the eyes of the Church and the world—he quietly declined the supreme allurement of his life and bent once more to the burden the Church had laid upon him, and, with a patience, fortitude, self-sacrifice and heroism all too seldom witnessed, went straight forward, without a murmur or complaint, until he had made the enterprise a success and given to New England Methodism a house of worship worthy to endure for a thousand years, and always be a fitting monument to the man without whose wisdom, skill and perseverance it would never have been erected. In all his work if there was a way to victory he would find it; if there was no way he would make one. Great leader of men, great captain under Jesus in the army of the Lord! Where he was the banner of the cross never trailed in the dust, never marked a retreat. In his stalwart grasp it flashed in the sunlight of faith and hope far in advance of the laggard steps of ordinary mortals.

Dr. Brodbeck's words and works are alike worthy the study and emulation of all our people—especially of our young people, and emphatically of our preachers, whether young or old. It will be found, among other things in this study, that Dr. Brodbeck's ministry was characterized by two predominant qualities. First of all, he was an evangelist. He had heard the good news for himself, and he was ready to obey the divine command, "Let him that heareth say, Come." He knew something of

the sinfulness of sin as the Spirit enlightened his mind and aroused his conscience, and he knew also the bitter experience of repentance. By faith he had passed from darkness to light, from anguish to peace, from death to life. In his own soul he had found the joy that is "unspeakable and full of glory," and so there sprang up in his nature an intense and steadfast desire to lead men from the paths of sin to the new and blessed life in Christ.

For twenty-five years his converts averaged more than one for every sermon he preached. It is doubtful if he ever preached a sermon to be heard of men, or to secure the praise of men. A sermon with him was never an end, it was a means to an end. He went to his pulpit from an open Bible, earnestly studied and thoroughly believed; he went from his knees to his pulpit; and then with all his deathless love for souls he preached the gospel. He had no time for vain discussion, nor for fine-spun theories concerning indifferent matters. He was intent on applying living truth to the hearts and consciences of living men who would soon be dead. Men might possibly resist him, and refuse his messages, but he left them without excuse and was ready to meet them at the bar of judgment. Sinners under his preaching were constrained to feel that they were listening to a gospel minister, to a God-fearing lover of souls, to one who was sent from the court of heaven to offer pardon and peace to every penitent soul. Dr. Brodbeck was a great-hearted Christian man, and at the same time he was a devoted, loyal Methodist. He had a sincere

and genuine love for all the followers of the Master, but he had a deep, peculiar love for his own Church. He had that faith in the polity of his Church which naturally results from an intelligent understanding of its principles, a wide and varied observation of its workings, and an extensive experience of its practical operations. His faith did not fail even when special and extraordinary personal hardships were involved. Ecclesiastically speaking, the yoke might not be easy nor the burden light, but his brave soul and stalwart faith were not seeking easy yokes and light burdens. He wanted to be where he could best serve God and his fellow-men. At the same time he had an unfaltering faith in the doctrines of his Church. He spent little time, if any, in an effort of intellectual gymnastics to restate in modern phrase the fundamental doctrines of the gospel already stated by the fathers of Methodism in tersest sentences and choicest Saxon. He was not carried about by any wind of doctrine and the cunning craftiness of men. He built on Christ as the chief corner stone, and believed in the Bible from beginning to end. While he recognized the fact that all men are sinners, and that there is no human or angelic remedy for sin, he most thoroughly believed that Jesus Christ by the grace of God had tasted death for every man, and that all might find pardon and salvation through repentance and faith. With all his soul he believed in the necessity and possibility of justification and regeneration as taught by Wesley. He believed in the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit; that the

Holy Ghost conjointly testifies with human consciousness to the adoption into the heavenly family of every regenerate soul; that in some way, at some time, the third Person of the adorable Trinity witnesses personally and directly to every believer that he is a child of God and an heir of heaven. He devoutly believed in the doctrine of a present, free and full salvation; in a Saviour who saves to the utmost; in a baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire—a baptism that cleanses and inspires, and prepares for effective service in every field of Christian activity. His faith in these doctrines was not only theoretical but practical; not only of the head but of the heart; for in his own life he had experienced and demonstrated the truth of these glorious doctrines. Besides all this he felt the perils, he realized in a measure the awful danger of the unsaved, and at the same time he saw their needs and their utter helplessness; and so it was that his tender, affectionate, sympathetic nature impelled him by all means to win them to the Lord Jesus Christ. He seemed sometimes to be so anxious and burdened for souls that it may truthfully be said of him that he shared with Christ a real fellowship in his suffering for the salvation of men. Dr. Brodbeck was an evangelist because in this service, with utter unselfishness and entire consecration, he laid all he had of life and love upon the altar of God and humanity. The more I think of this dear brother, the more I recall his spirit—his labors, his life, his quenchless love for sinning men—the more I wish and

pray that I and all our preachers may be like him.

Again, Dr. Brodbeck was preeminently a pastor. He was systematic and faithful in this to a remarkable degree. He put his conscience into this work. He would have despised himself if he had confined his ministrations to the homes of luxury, where he would certainly have been welcome. He did not confine his labors to those of his own church and congregation, but he sought for the friendless, the uncared for, the unloved, the outcasts. He never feared or hesitated to enter the damp, cheerless basement, or climb rickety stairs to dingy attics, in his care for souls. He knew that the lowliest were loved by his Master, and that in these obscure places he might find rarest jewels for the diadem of the King of glory. I have sometimes thought it might be of great advantage to a preacher to have been born in an abode of penury and to have known in early life the discomforts of extreme poverty, for the reason that so one might be the better able to come very close, and very helpfully, to the toiling and struggling and suffering ones of earth. Dr. Brodbeck had a gift and a habit of knowing poor people; he knew them well enough to shake hands with them; he remembered their names, and where they lived, and visited them in their humble homes just as he would the affluent and the rich. He was a son of consolation in the homes darkened by affliction and sorrow. His words of hope, his prayers of sympathy, and the sweet songs he so well knew how to sing have banished many a cloud, and given

rest to many a weary heart. Little children loved him, for his smile gave them confidence, and he knew right well how to increase their joys and soothe their griefs. Young people loved him, for his straightforward hearty way—his breezy, healthful recognition of their trials and conflicts as well as their aspirations and joys—made him seem like a father or brother. His pastoral visiting was like that of the great apostle Paul—both preached the gospel from house to house with tears. His visits were not hours of aimless, frivolous gossip or idle talk about matters of small import; he went to the homes of his people as a friend and brother, but also as a representative of his Master. His supreme and constant object in his pastoral work was to care for and to feed the flock, and at the same time lead wandering souls to the fold of the Good Shepherd. Without a doubt there are hundreds of people in the various churches he has served, and hundreds more in heaven, who were led to Christ as the result of his faithful pastoral work.

To my thought, in almost, if not quite every respect, but especially as an evangelist and pastor, Dr. Brodbeck was a model Christian minister; a model Methodist preacher. Ah! When I feel the truth of this, when I behold his ripening powers, when I think of the ever-multiplying opportunities that were opening to him, when I think of how few there are like him, when I think how much this poor world needs such men—there rises unbidden in my soul a cry to call him back. How we shall miss him! How the world will miss him; but how

glad they are to have him in heaven! Even now I seem to see him standing in the presence of the Master with his arms crowded full of sheaves gathered in the harvest fields of earth. And so in the years to come, as the thousands saved through his faithful labors, one by one, shall pass away from earth, our sainted brother will welcome them home and present them to the Lamb of God who died for them.

May this volume, all too meager though it may be in comparison with what our hearts would have it, go forth to perpetuate and increase the precious, godly influence of one whose living and dying have brought priceless blessings to many souls.

WILLARD F. MALLALIEU.

# A TRIBUTE.

WITH others who are laying a few flowers upon the newmade grave of our dear Dr. Brodbeck, I ask the privilege of saying a word.

Dr. Brodbeck has been removed from among us to a higher sphere of existence. I feel it to be a privilege to have known him. He stands in my mind as one in a small group of the purest and noblest souls I have ever known.

As a preacher, Dr. Brodbeck had few equals, was most distinguished for his fervor and zeal—for the excellence of his thought as well. He was a pastor of the rarest qualities; his powers were consecrated in a high degree; the Church has suffered a great loss.

RANDOLPH S. FOSTER.

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

WILLIAM NAST BRODBECK was a striking figure. In almost any company he attracted attention. His features were strong and distinguished. His physique was sturdy, his bearing dignified, his manner affable, his presence altogether impressive. To an air of importance there was always added the charm of geniality. His carriage was upright, his step firm. He moved like a man of power, and he looked like a good man, full of good nature. On the streets he was always noticed. He easily held the attention of those in his immediate company, and to those who looked on he would generally seem the chief personage in that company. Whatever he did was done in a manner that made it seem important. He was an ornament to any platform. Did he only announce a hymn? That hymn, as a result, became a feature of interest. Did he pray? It was no perfunctory utterance, and the meeting was thereafter distinctly more religious. Did he speak? All felt that a good cause had been strengthened, even if there was nothing brilliant in his language.

In the pulpit he seemed especially at home; and the pulpit, materially considered, being only a contrivance of man, it is not irreverent to say that this man never occupied any pulpit without giving dignity to it. His movements, his tones, his pres-

ence, and what he said were all suggestive of the man of God. People who listened to him were less impressed by the sermon than by the God-sent ambassador who was preaching. His chief charm was his strong, genial, sanctified personality. Many ministers have been more widely known, but how very few, within the circle of their acquaintance, have had so many who loved them? Thousands who have had him for a pastor have revered him as they never did any other. To some of our honored bishops he was as dear as a younger brother; by hundreds of young ministers, as fondly regarded and as fully trusted as an elder brother could have been.

So much had he gone about to help his brethren that his presence had become familiar in scores, perhaps in hundreds, of Methodist parsonages. His visits in such homes were always delightful while they lasted, and were cherished by the inmates as a sweet memory ever afterward. With no title to such an office, he still, by virtue of his large sympathy and rich endowment of grace, went in and out of our preachers' homes as a chief pastor. The children knew and loved him; they could not help it, because he always conversed with them, and never failed in his prayer to ask a blessing upon each by name.

By the wives of our ministers, intuitively discerning, always looking for goodness and ever responsive to kindly interest, this unofficial chief pastor was invariably regarded as a friend. His visits cheered them. They knew he had lifted the

load that had been settling of late upon the dear, overwrought husband, and they blessed and loved him for it. His prayers at the family altar, they could not help feeling, would mean something ; they were so uncommon, they went so far into particulars, they covered so many interests and were so brotherly and earnest. Opening their own hearts in so much tenderness, they could not doubt that the entreaties of this whole-souled man of God would somehow open toward them in greater tenderness the loving heart and strong hand of our common Lord.

Because his personality was so charming and helpful there is naturally a desire for a personal history of this captivating man. Some sketch of his life is due to the great Church he served so well. It is due to himself as a minister of unusual ability and achievements. It is due to his devoted and fondly cherished family. It might well be written, also, to gratify a certain wholesome curiosity. All but universal now is the conviction that men grow into what they become, and that to understand properly the finished career one must know its beginnings, and must trace it through its developments. Strikingly will this be illustrated in the biography of William Nast Brodbeck ; and if it were written for this purpose alone it would be a wholesome undertaking and might challenge interest. But the author of this sketch offers it chiefly as a tribute from one who himself was long enchained by love of this good man to the many others who loved him. Bigger than his career was his heart ;

greater than his work was the man; and it is chiefly for the gratification of those who knew and loved him that the man is sketched in these inadequate pages.

## I.

He was a distinct contribution to English-speaking Methodism from our splendid German work; and his character and life illustrated some of the best features of that work. We glory in German Methodism for its intelligent devotion to our doctrinal standards, for its warm, practical espousal of our Conference benevolences, for its fidelity to the old landmarks of Church polity, for the clearness and fervor of its experience, for the unction attending its preaching; and for all these traits do thousands glory in William Nast Brodbeck, who was, under God, an outgrowth of German Methodism. While his wife was sitting in the shadow of death, many were the telegrams of condolence she received, and among these was one from the editor of the *Apologist*, saying: "Humbly as my father always thought of himself, he was still ever proud that your husband bore his name." This was Albert F. Nast to Mrs. William Nast Brodbeck; and those who were intimate with our friend are well aware that the pride naturally felt in his namesake by the founder of German Methodism in this country was heartily reciprocated by the one to whom that honored name had been given. With advancing years his honest pride in the name of William Nast had naturally

increased. In early days his concern was how not to discredit that name; later, as his possibilities of usefulness expanded, anxiety gave place to a proper ambition. He wanted by all worthy means to add luster to that name.

William Nast was a potent factor in shaping the career of William Nast Brodbeck. There is undoubtedly much in a name. This name was conferred in holy admiration for a devoted servant of God. Possibly, at the baptism, the good Paul and Catherine Brodbeck scarcely hoped their babe would become all that the years made of him. But the same feelings which led them to name him after a good man caused them inevitably to give him a good training. That even thus early they prayed to God to make him a minister cannot be doubted; and when it is remembered that his mother's prayers had already brought his father into the kingdom it is impossible to believe otherwise than that from her heart went up, in that baptismal service, the prayer of faith.

From his mother did our friend inherit his physical characteristics, and it was through her that he traced ancestrally his first relation to Methodism. Catherine Whitbeck was a descendant of those Hollanders who early settled in the State of New York. She was a girl of humble position, self-supporting, and a Protestant. Her birthplace was Kinderhook, but we find her early at Troy, N. Y., a member of the State Street Methodist Episcopal Church. Here she was married September 3, 1835, to Paul Brodbeck, a Roman Catholic, who the year

before had emigrated, at the age of twenty-five, from his native town in the Grand Duchy of Baden. Rev. Noah Levings tied the knot which united these two in holy matrimony; but the tie which bound them together in Christian love and made them one in Church fellowship was not formed until two years later, when they had removed to Portsmouth, O.

In this work the prayers and influence of a good wife were supplemented by the faithful preaching of a Methodist pastor. It was under a very pointed watch-night sermon that Paul Brodbeck surrendered. Some say that the truth had driven him to seek refuge under a seat, and that Brother John McDowell, finding him there, prostrate and penitent, reported his capture and electrified the audience in doing so. But this may not be true. The story as told by the elder Brodbeck is as follows:

"I commenced going to the Methodist church with my wife, and gradually became attached to their doctrine and modes of worship, but at the same time I was very fond of the ballroom and the dance. On the evening of the 31st of December, 1837, we had a great ball in town, and at the same time the Methodists held a watch-night meeting. After spending the fore part of the night at the ballroom, dancing, something suddenly seemed to say to me, 'The Methodists hold a watch-night, and you must go and see what they are doing.' Accordingly, I left the ballroom about nine o'clock, and went to the church and heard a sermon by Rev. Henry Turner, then preacher in charge of Bigelow Chapel.

I listened with great attention, but could not hear anything that, as I then thought, suited my case. At the close of the sermon the minister descended from the pulpit, came into the altar, and invited all seekers of religion to come forward and kneel around the altar for the prayers of the church and to seek the salvation of their souls. While some were going forward for prayer, and some were joining the church, my conscience told me, 'You must go, for you are a great sinner, or you will be eternally lost.' Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, but yielded to the convictions of the moment, went forward, joined the church, and threw myself down at the altar and prayed and wrestled, like Jacob of old, till nearly twelve o'clock at night, when, by the grace of God, I was enabled to shout 'Glory!' having obtained redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins."

During all this time his wife supposed he was still at the ballroom, and when he returned to tell what had occurred she also shouted "Glory!" he informs us, and for a long time they praised God together.

Then followed the persecutions usual in such cases. Paul Brodbeck's father was so incensed that his son had forsaken the Roman Catholic fold to become a Methodist that he forbade him at first the ordinary privileges of relationship, and threatened even worse things. But time and the Holy Spirit, cooperating with good sense and Christian patience, work great changes in this world,

and the father of William Nast Brodbeck lived to see every member of his father's family converted and brought into the Methodist Church. Meanwhile, he was also busy in getting others converted. So diligent was he in labors, so correct in life, and so fervent in spirit, that he was soon licensed as an exhorter. His work at this time was among those who spoke English, but his prayers looked ever to the final opening of some door of effort in behalf of his compatriots of the German tongue.

After a few years such an opening was presented. It came through William Nast. It was a door which admitted him finally to the Christian ministry, a walk of life in which he labored and which he adorned by twenty years of active, fruitful service; his strong, noble wife being always an efficient helpmeet in this ministry. From an excellent funeral sketch by Rev. Dr. E. T. Wells, of the Cincinnati Conference, it appears that the elder Brodbeck's first charge was a circuit of nine appointments, including a mission work in Portsmouth. September 3, 1845, he entered the Ohio Conference and was appointed by Bishop Hamline to Wheeling, Va. His next appointment was to Marietta, O., and here, in 1847, in a parsonage which was really a part of the church building, was born his youngest son, the subject of this sketch. The fact that, as he was fond of putting it, "he was born in a Methodist church," was always a matter of interest to William Nast Brodbeck. He often referred to it in his addresses on Methodism. There is no doubt that he regarded it as a happy

providential coincidence, and no one can say that this was not, like the distinguished name he bore, a constant stimulus to nobility and service.

Paul Brodbeck's last appointment was to Piqua, O. Here he served from 1863 to 1865, marking his pastorate by the erection of a church, and here he settled down, in somewhat broken health, into the restful but still useful and honored life of a superannuate. In all his appointments save two he had served his full term, and twice he returned to the same church a second time. Dr. Wells says: "His ministry was successful; he was blessed with revivals in all his charges. His work and fruit are seen not only in his public life and ministrations, but in his private and domestic life. His children are a tribute of praise to the excellency of his character and example."

Three of the seven children of Paul and Catherine Brodbeck died in infancy. One of these fell asleep in Jesus while this German itinerant was absent on his first large circuit. It was impossible to reach him, and as Dr. Wells pathetically remarks, "when he returned, the little one whom he left in perfect health was in her grave." The other children are Francis Anthony, Frederick Paul, Mrs. Eliza S. Wise, and William Nast, of whom Dr. Wells said at the time of Rev. Paul Brodbeck's funeral in 1889: "These are all worthy, upright, efficient and honored members of society and the Church, respected in their various walks of life, a credit to their parents and a fulfillment of the command, 'Honor thy father and thy mother.'"

Of William Nast he added : " As the youngest of the family and following the cherished calling of his father, he was very near to his father's heart. Naturally, in my visits, as I knew this son and am a minister myself, he was led to talk of him. It was touching to hear the tender way in which, in his last illness, he would speak of him, calling him as he was no doubt wont to do in his childhood, 'Willie.' Always the boy to the father's heart and love, though strong in manhood's strength and doing valiantly in the battle of life."

Catherine Brodbeck had preceded her husband into the spirit-land by eight years, and for some years before his death the tender nursing offices of wifehood had been performed toward this aged servant of God by the Christian woman who still survives and who is esteemed by the children little less than was the noble mother who bore them. In Piqua, O., where for a generation the family home has been, there is a German Methodist church. It was built by Paul Brodbeck, but has since been remodeled, and in it there is a beautiful memorial window commemorating both Paul and Catherine. This is one of the tributes of William Nast to his father and mother.

## II.

His life, up to sixteen, we are left largely to imagine. We know, however, that it was one of changing localities, and we have the order of those changes. From Marietta, O., where he was born, June 25, 1847, the itinerary of his father took him to Pomeroy; thence to Portsmouth, where his

father's work began; from there to Toledo; then to Columbus; after that to Newport, Ky.; from that place, which is just across the river from Cincinnati, to Hamilton, O.; thence back to Marietta, his birthplace; and from there, at sixteen, to Piqua, O., where his father settled down, and where he himself continued to reside until he entered the ministry.

One glimpse of him we have when he was fifteen, and it reveals him in a light which does not in the least surprise us. Commenting upon his death, Dr. David H. Moore, editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*, said in that paper: "'Will' Brodbeck was preeminently of our households in Ohio. All his success and ministerial greatness could not make him other to us than the dear, true, and familiar friend." Then, this flash of personal reminiscence, which may account in part for the fact that our knightly Western editor became so strongly attached to Will Brodbeck: "When his father was pastor of our German church in Marietta, in 1862, we first knew him, a lad following the mustering volunteers with martial mimicry, his young breast swelling with patriotic devotion."

It is impossible not to believe that the boys of that warlike period got lessons in both patriotism and courage such as are not afforded to those growing up in more peaceful times, and to this environment we may credit some of our friend's moral hardihood, and the pluck and grit which made him ever a champion in pending reforms. But if the war spirit had its effect, how much more the quiet, frugal, honest, Christly spirit of that German Meth-

odist parsonage. We cannot doubt that in that home family prayer would be as regular as the rising and setting of the sun. Little is imagination taxed in filling out the details of his life at this period. He would be sure to have the best schooling obtainable ; for Methodist preachers, whatever their own deficiencies in early days, have been proverbial all along for the care they have shown in educating their children ; and in this case the German predilection toward schooling affords a further guarantee.

And what a spiritual education would be going on all the time through a father's prayers, by a mother's example of Christian patience, by the reliance of both upon the Bible, by the regularity with which parents and children would attend the sanctuary, by the fervor marking the meetings, and by the evangelistic tone which such a man as Paul Brodbeck would be sure to give to his sermons. Every winter witnessed a revival, and these phenomena would necessarily produce a growing impression on the mind and soul of that one among their children whom his parents, by the name they had given him, had seemed to preempt for active service in the kingdom of Christ. The elder Brodbeck measured his ministerial success solely by the number of souls he saved, and the younger Brodbeck must have known this. It was the talk of the household ; it was in the air he breathed. It was drilled into his being by every prayer, every exhortation, every sermon.

Similarly did he get a taste in those days of some of the hardships of the Methodist itinerancy.

William Nast Brodbeck had a marvelously developed sympathy for his brethren. No doubt this began to grow with the inside view he got, while only a growing lad, of what some ministers have to bear. His father's scant salary made frugality needful. Constantly was the household impressed that economy must rule, and that to help God take care of them in the future they must try to lay by a little. This teaching William never forgot. Always a generous giver, he was also ever regardful of the time to come. So good was his financial management that in business life he could probably have amassed a fortune. He did save a little even as a Methodist preacher, notwithstanding his abounding generosity toward our Church benevolences. And this trait, applied to religious things, had much to do with the success of his pastorates. He urged his brethren to gather up the fragments. He preached and practiced the giving to God of at least the scriptural tenth; and hundreds of the poorest, stimulated by his own example, did it. Not the least among his strong points was his power as a church money raiser, and he doubtless got his first lessons in both frugality and benevolence in the frugal home in which his character was formed.

Now he is sixteen, and is settled in Piqua, O. Schooling still continues, but he is anxious to be doing something. He feels the strain at home, and will soon be helping to relieve it. More than formerly he mingles with Methodists who speak English, and attends English-speaking churches. Still, however, does he find himself in a revival atmos-

phere. The Piqua Methodists have always been noted for a high type of spirituality. They were an intelligent folk even in those days; yet they were zealous for the old Methodist forms, and they measured a pastor very largely by what he could bring to pass as a revivalist.

The pastor of Greene Street Methodist Church in 1865 was Granville Moody. He was fresh from service in the army of the Union. Naturally a combative man, he wore now the honors of a real fighter for his country, besides having a State-wide reputation as a fighter for the Lord. He was often called general, and he was at least a colonel in rank; one of the brainiest and pluckiest men that ever belonged to the Cincinnati Conference. His memory was an encyclopedia, full of information on all subjects, all of it indexed and ready for immediate use. Not always an entire success in the pastorate, owing to certain not discreditable peculiarities, but a preacher of great strength, with a diction that was classical in its finish and at times overpowering in its sweep of conviction. He could easily preach two hours and not utter a dull remark from beginning to end; and, withal, he was, though strongly combative, a man of tender heart, broad sympathies, incorruptible integrity, and Holy Ghost power.

Such was the man under whose ministry William Nast Brodbeck was converted, and who in receiving him on probation welcomed into our Church a young man of eighteen who was destined to give his own hand in welcome at the altars of the same

great Church to no less than 2,460 souls, 1,375 of whom he received on probation. In the early part of 1865 this young man became a member of the Greene Street Sunday school, and was assigned to a class taught by Mrs. Alice Woods. Of this class and its location he says, in a reminiscent letter written May 4, 1882: "We occupied a place on the north side of the room, about midway between the front and rear. General Moody's Bible class was immediately behind us, and I vividly remember how frequently we were startled and amused by his unique and vigorous methods of defending the faith against the assaults of some chronic disputants who were enrolled among his scholars."

Still writing of that school, he gives us next a most interesting account of how his conversion was brought about, and we especially note in it the important part taken by a faithful Sabbath school teacher:

"Soon after I became a member of this school quite a revival interest arose in the church, and after a time reached into the school. It was not long until a number of our class were converted and members of the church, but for some unaccountable reason I felt no conviction whatever. As one after another of the class made a profession of faith in Christ, and united with the church, my indifference seemed to become distressing to our faithful teacher. On the afternoon of the last Sabbath of March of that year she seemed to be unusually affected while teaching the class, and urged upon us all the necessity of becoming firm Chris-

tians at once. At the close of the school she detained me for a few moments, and, taking my hand, said, with much emotion: 'I thought you would be the first to give your heart to Christ, but now all the others are converted, and you are the only one unsaved, and still you do not yield. Is it my fault?' Her earnestness and evident interest in my behalf touched me greatly, and I began to wonder myself why it was that I should feel so little concern when those around me were so aroused, especially as I knew I had enjoyed better privileges than many of them. The more I thought upon the matter the more serious it became to me, and I began to feel alarmed lest my hardness of heart was the result of the withdrawal of God's Spirit from me. In the evening I went to the church deeply convicted of my sinful condition. Brother Moody preached upon Isa. xl, 3, 4. At the close of the sermon an invitation was given for penitents to come to the altar of prayer. I went forward, and, as many of those who so kindly surrounded me there and prayed for me will remember, was happily converted to God before the evening was over. At the close of the service, in response to an invitation to unite with the church, I gave my hand to Brother Moody and my name to old Greene Street, and from that hour to September, 1872, when I joined the Cincinnati Conference, it remained upon her records, thanks be unto God."

Then occurs in the same letter this note of sadness:

"True, during that period there were several

years when my name as a member ought not to have been retained, but the brethren bore with me. Brother Shipley, my class leader—God bless him—was unwilling to give me up, and after a time this patient endurance was rewarded by witnessing my reclamation from a backslidden state. Had they not borne with me so patiently I know not where I might have been to-day. I shall never cease to be grateful to old Greene Street Church for her forbearance and patient waiting in my behalf."

The period to which our friend refers here so pathetically, and with so much gratitude to the Christian brethren whose forbearance saved him, was not marked by any serious moral lapse. It was chiefly a backsliding of heart, and, as he has often said, it began with disobedience on his part to the heavenly vision. Parents, pastors, Christian friends, all united, after his conversion, to voice to him a divine call to the Christian ministry. But his heart was set on business; somewhat, also, upon pleasure; for, as religious conviction relaxed, he yielded in some degree to the blandishments of the world. From experience he knew what worldly amusements were, and he learned sadly how inimical they may be to spirituality, and how utterly powerless to satisfy.

He himself, as we have seen by his own touching words, deeply regretted this lapse; yet who shall say that in the final result God did not make the wrath and folly of man to contribute in this instance to his own praise and kingdom? That picture of churchly forbearance was a guiding principle through all his ministry. That clinging class

leader was a memory which made him cling to the erring, and it heightened his appreciation of the office of the class leader. That there was a time when his own heart had thought foolishly to feed upon husks gave him a better understanding of what young people had to meet and resist in the way of temptation. Knowing something of both sides of life, he was better fitted to judge in justice and to plead and guide in mercy. When he told the thousands of young people who loved him that the love of the world meant enmity to God, he spoke as one who knew; his words, on that account, having all the more weight and all the more soul in them. Yet, in learning all this what a risk he ran! As he looked back he realized this, and his wise teaching ever was that no one can afford to tamper with sinful pleasure; that the plain duty and only safety of the young is to keep themselves unspotted.

His education was never completed; it was only such as the common schools offered. Had he looked toward the ministry when his heavenly call first came it would have been different. In that case some college would have opened to him and he would have entered it. In different surroundings and with other guidance he might have delayed for preparation even when, at twenty-five, he was willing to obey his call to the ministry. But the call came in the midst of a sweeping revival, and, as we all know, such a call meant in those days more specifically than now a call to go out and save souls. Nor can anyone affirm that delay

for educational reasons would have been wise either in this case or in similar ones. Some things antecedently questionable are shown by results in a different light.

His ministry was successful from the first, and before the public he could stand up unblushingly side by side with the men our colleges were turning out. Nature had endowed him with one of the brightest and quickest of minds, and his schooling, which had given him not a little knowledge, had also begotten a thirst for more and had trained his faculties in such a way as to make learning easy. In his Conference studies he always took the first grade, and meanwhile he was dipping into Greek and Hebrew and devouring the biographies and sermons of the greatest preachers. To the generality of people he always appeared like a man well fitted for his work, and undoubtedly he was. When he began his career in New England it seemed like a strange irony to some that a young fellow who had entered the ministry from behind a dry-goods counter should have been chosen by one of our most scholarly bishops to fill the leading Methodist pulpit in Boston. But no one who knew William Nast Brodbeck doubted the wisdom of this choice, and by those who heard him, but did not know his history, his lack of early training was not even suspected.

It was while serving as a clerk for the firm of Morrow & Parker, in Piqua, that his mind was turned toward a legal career. With this in prospect he pursued an intelligent course of study and

applied himself so thoroughly that, in addition to the development of some eye trouble, his general health broke down. Here, perhaps, Providence was working, as it also wrought to his advantage in the serious illness of a dear friend, Harley Wood, whose earnest and religious conversations in the sick room were one of the chief agencies in his religious renewal. About this time he left Piqua in search of health, but before doing so he had taught a class of young ladies in the Sunday school. Among his choicest treasures was a beautiful Bible, presented to him by this class Christmas Eve, 1869.

Upon returning to Piqua he took charge of a class, of which he speaks as "the strangers and visitors' class," into which were drafted those who happened to "drop in," and who generally dropped into the back seats. Very appropriately this class was located near the door. Of his sense of responsibility at this time he says, "As I had been reclaimed during that year from a backslidden state I was anxious to lead all the members of my class into the religious life." Here was beginning his religious activity, and to what it led he shall tell us in his own words, which all will recognize as being characteristic because, while the tone is spiritual, it still has a note of humor in it:

"During the winter of 1872, under the labors of Brother Fee, Greene Street was visited by a remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God. While laboring as best I could in the Sabbath school and church for the upbuilding of Zion I was startled almost out of my senses one evening at the close

of service by Brother Fee handing me an envelope containing what proved to be an 'exhorter's license,' made out by the Methodist Church in general and Rev. W. I. Fee in particular, in favor of W. N. Brodbeck. The only consolation I had in my great shock was found in the fact that Brother Harley Wood, who was in conversation with me at the time, received a like envelope containing his commission as a class leader. I refused to accept my license, whereupon Brother Fee, with his usual kindness of heart, and as a punishment for my obstinacy, had me brought up before the Quarterly Conference, and, after an excruciating examination upon subjects of which I knew nothing, had me marked perfect, licensed for a local preacher, and recommended for admission on trial to the traveling connection at the ensuing Conference. By a reference to my parchments just now I find that my exhorter's license bears date of March 12, 1872, and the local preacher's June 8th of same year. Thus, before I was scarcely aware of it, or could fully realize it all, I found myself fully launched into the 'gulf stream' of the itinerary as a young Methodist preacher."

William I. Fee, who was God's agent in leading William Nast Brodbeck into the Methodist ministry, is one of the most remarkable men Ohio Methodism has produced. In a lovely old age, embowered in the esteem of all who know him, he still lingers in the world for its good, and in his retirement from active work has settled down at Piqua. Dr. Fee in his prime always filled the best

appointments, yet he never sought them, and would at any time have felt honored to labor for Christ on the hardest circuit. He was a great revivalist, and he won all his victories by love. He has been for years the beloved John of the Cincinnati Conference. One of the most modest and self-sacrificing of ministers; not highly gifted as a speaker, but socially one of the richest of men, with a heart as tender as a child's, with a spirit that ravished, with a sweetness and loveliness of manner that could scarcely be resisted; a peerless pastor, a stainless saint, and such an evangel of light and salvation as this world seldom sees. How many thousands this man has brought into the kingdom! Of those he has received into the Church one hundred and twenty-five have entered the ministry; most of them under his guidance. He was an early friend of Bishop Foster; he and the bishop united with the Ohio Conference the same year. But to how many has he been a friend! The writer's own heart says, "God bless Brother Fee!" and William Nast Brodbeck breathed a heart blessing upon him every day for twenty-six years.

Through all his ministry William I. Fee was to our friend as Paul was to Timothy. If the letters passing between them could be obtained they would make a love story fit for angels to read. When Brother Fee wrote him, while his call to Baltimore was pending, "Go without hesitation; this is of God; I am as sure of it as I am of my own existence," the matter was settled for William Nast Brodbeck. It was largely through the influ-

ence of this man of God, constantly exerted and always increasing, that his son in the gospel never slackened in his revival zeal. In his captivating book entitled *Bringing the Sheaves* Dr. Fee makes several allusions to his ministerial *protégé*, but they are, like himself, very modest. To publicly boast of his ministerial son would be as far from his nature as any personal boast.

Writing of a temperance revival and the organization in Piqua of the Sons of Temperance, he says: "This opened a new field for religious work among our young men, among whom might be named William Nast Brodbeck, who was elected to the highest office in the order, and became a great power on the subject of temperance." Elsewhere he says, in describing his great revival at Piqua: "Our congregations were crowded, and interest pervaded all classes. After a long and agonizing struggle William Nast Brodbeck was powerfully converted while a number of us were kneeling around him and weeping. How we rejoiced at this glowing victory! He entered the ministry, in which he has been successful from then until now."

While his steps were thus being turned toward the ministry something else was going on. Gradually by cords of love he was being drawn toward the ministry involved in holy wedlock. He had known for nine years a sweet-faced, fair-haired girl. He had watched her as she developed into young womanhood, and she had seen the boy verging into the man. They were much in each other's company. They liked each other, and like deep-

ened into love. Sue Carrington was a Christian and a Presbyterian; but she was more of a Christian than anything else. She was, indeed, a devout, exemplary girl, quiet, tender, thoroughly domesticated, and very good. The only coldness was when Will was not walking straight religiously. While his heart was true to Christ, these two hearts beat as one. A brief interruption made the subsequent courtship both sweeter and surer. When Will had finally yielded to the call toward the ministry he wondered what this dear little woman would think of it. How blind we are sometimes to the things which are as plain as day! She thought of this step now as she had always thought of it; she had all along shared the opinion of his other friends, namely, that he ought to preach. But how could he marry a Presbyterian if he was going to be a Methodist preacher? This was Sue's query; but Will soon untied that knot by tying another. Rev. T. M. Hopkins, the Presbyterian minister at Piqua, married them, assisted by the father of the groom. This was on November 12, 1872, and after that Sue Carrington became a Methodist. To her is largely due the fact that he became, after a short lapse into worldliness, the devoted Christian man he was when they joined hands, and to her, no less, a full share of his success in the ministry.

## III.

His license as a local preacher was signed June 8, 1872, by Rev. Silas Bennett, who must have

been the presiding elder at that time; a minister of quiet manner and steady usefulness, greatly esteemed by all his brethren, and by Will Brodbeck dearly loved. His first sermon was preached June 23 of that year; not in Greene Street Church, but in Grace Church, Piqua, whose pastor at that time was Madison A. Richards, ever a dear and helpful acquaintance. The first pulpit utterance of our friend is printed in this volume. His theme, when he began, was "The Glorious Gospel of Christ;" and, by a striking coincidence, the theme with which, unconsciously to himself, he closed his earthly ministry was "The Gospel of God," which he especially dealt with, that last Sunday evening at Charlestown, in its bearing upon those who reject it. Here is a pathetic indication of what his preaching was throughout. It is no more true that he began and ended with the gospel than that he preached nothing but the pure gospel in the intervening years.

In the fall of 1872 he was received on trial into the Cincinnati Conference. Bishop Isaac W. Wiley presided, and the session was at Eaton. Our friend was then unmarried, not at all the stout figure known so well in New England, but spectacled already, and extremely companionable. It is needless to say he got the highest indorsement from his elder and pastor, and was voted in with enthusiastic unanimity. Even thus early was his name commented upon. It did not hurt him that his father was a minister, nor that he had christened him for another minister of renown. But with all his advantages he had to take, and was glad to take, an appoint-

ment that did not promise much either financially or spiritually. He was assigned to a small community with the large, historic name of Tippecanoe City, and had under his charge, also, a still smaller church in a neighboring village. The first we learn of him at Tippecanoe is that he leaves his charge in search of a wife. An entry in his "Historical Record" says: "Preached my last sermon as a single man on the 10th of November, 1872. Text, Rev. iii, 20." This also was a gospel sermon, and the text, it must be admitted, was not inappropriate to the new and closer fellowship he was seeking.

The next information from this first charge is of the kind which his later life would lead us naturally to expect. The *Piqua Journal* is saying, "A great revival was in progress last week at Tippecanoe, under the ministrations of Rev. W. N. Brodbeck, who is doing a glorious work in that section." Later we hear that the scene of this, his first revival, is visited by two dozen of his Piqua admirers, and a local paper observes: "This visit was highly complimentary to the young and talented revivalist who, only a short time since, was an attache of one of the business houses of this city." Then follows the pleasant note: "It is predicted that a brilliant future awaits him;" a sample of the kind of encouragement which was lavished upon him constantly in those days.

It was during his pastorate at Tippecanoe that the Woman's Temperance Crusade swept over Ohio. Of its effect upon that little town of fifteen hundred inhabitants, he wrote to the *Piqua Journal* April 7, 1874:

"It is generally known that our town in the past has borne rather a hard reputation; hence, when it was understood that our ladies contemplated a crusade upon 'King Alcohol' defeat was predicted on every hand. Notwithstanding these discouragements, our Christian women, after a week of earnest prayer to God for help and direction, started upon their great mission of love on Tuesday, March 17, just three weeks ago to-day. Just one week from that day the hotel bar surrendered, and on the following Friday the two most prominent saloons in town surrendered to the ladies unconditionally amidst the greatest rejoicing and thanksgiving that I ever witnessed. The two remaining saloons closed the following week; so that in less than three weeks the work was accomplished, and there was no place in town where intoxicating liquors could be obtained by the drink. This was all done by the Christian women without the aid of law, and the men who yielded did it cheerfully and, I might say, thankfully. On yesterday we confirmed the work of the ladies by electing a good temperance ticket. We now have a temperance mayor, marshal, and council, and will shortly have a prohibitory ordinance to protect us from any saloons from a distance, which might be inclined to come here."

When in Tremont Temple, Boston, the people of New England celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of the crusade, the former pastor at Tippecanoe made a speech, of which a careful reporter said, "From the first Dr. Brodbeck had the sympathy of the audience, moving them to laughter and tears

as he recounted his experiences." There were two distilleries in Tippecanoe, and when, at a large meeting, those were asked to rise who would visit the saloons, the first to stand up was the wife of the leading distiller. Both distilleries, he assured his Boston audience, were closed and had never been reopened. Humorously did he allude, also, to a note he received in those exciting times. It was from a saloon keeper, and read as follows:

"We gives you just two days to leave this town. We means what we says; now git out."

After two years of successful service he did leave Tippecanoe that fall, but it was Bishop Ames who moved him, not the threatening letter of this saloon keeper. At this session of the Conference he was ordained a deacon, and was assigned to Wright Chapel, Cumminsville, O. Of this appointment he has often facetiously said, "This was the only time I ever preached in a graveyard, and the bishop apologized for sending me there;" a remark which needs explaining.

Cumminsville was in the outskirts of Cincinnati. It had a somewhat unsavory record at that time, its other name being "hell town." The Methodist Church illustrated in its location what dismal mistakes we Methodists can commit in locating our places of worship. It was away from the people, and had been built on donated land in the corner of a cemetery. Aside from these drawbacks it was not an undesirable charge. The salary was better than at Tippecanoe. There were many excellent people in the church; one of them was so very

honest that I saw him myself hand our friend the amount of an unpaid subscription months after his pastorate there had ended. At Cumminsville now they have a thriving church in a good location. The town to-day bears altogether a different reputation ; though, even as it was formerly, God blessed for a year the labors of his faithful servant, and there was a good revival.

Hardly ever have the transitions of our itinerancy been more strikingly illustrated than in the change which came when William Nast Brodbeck was sent by Bishop Andrews from Cumminsville to Grace Church, Avondale ; for the latter place was very near the apex of Cincinnati suburban life, while the former was not far from the bottom. Avondale is beautiful for situation, and the church at that time had in it a few of the most refined of our Methodist families. The only trouble was they were too few, and some of them, for practical, Methodistic purposes, a little too refined. So our friend felt; and he often remarked in his witty way that " the Avondale people were having too nice a time in this life to work very hard for the mansions promised in the other." But they were lovely people, and out of the church of that day, which, in its site and structure, was quite too humble for its surroundings, has sprung a cause of rare strength and quality and an edifice which is a credit to Cincinnati Methodism. Upon his work there in 1875–76 his own comments are very illuminating : " During two years four joined on probation and twelve by letter." " This place gave me," he adds, " a grand

opportunity for study," and, no doubt, in affording him this opportunity, it had a distinct place in his providential development.

It was during his Cumminsville and Avondale appointments that he began to affiliate in so delightful a way with his ministerial brethren. Few ministers of no greater opportunities have known intimately so many other ministers, or loved them so truly, or by them been loved so well in return; and this was when it all began. Before this his affiliations had been mostly in Piqua, and his inspiration had come from a few. Now, every Monday, he is here and there among the buzzing, breezy crowd at the Methodist Book Room, and attends regularly the Cincinnati Preachers' Meeting. Delightful days those were; tears flow as they are recalled—a tribute to the truest, closest, holiest, and most helpful fellowship of a lifetime. The afternoons of Monday were spent in rambles over the Cincinnati hilltops. The talk was chiefly of preaching; outlines of sermons were given, and, of course, where Will Brodbeck was the central figure, there was plenty of fun, no lack of good stories, and a good time generally. Professor Charles W. Rishell referred to this in broken voice at the funeral service. He spoke of a happy trio of young ministers. Charles himself was a member of that trio.

But no little circle could ever monopolize such a man as Brodbeck. It could not then; it never has done since; and much as a few hearts may dwell upon their own privileges at that time, we all see

now that our friend was beginning then to shed on a wide circle of ministerial acquaintances that luster of friendship which continued to radiate in an ever-extending sphere as long as he lived.

Those who knew him then could see how he attached to him the younger brethren. It was because his big soul was always unaffectedly interested in their work, and in all their personal concerns. Here also began his tender affiliation with the brethren of years; and one easily sees, in looking back, why he always loved the old ministers and was always beloved by them. It was his natural thoughtfulness and his very tender heart that drew him toward the veterans of the ministry. No worthy minister of the Cincinnati Conference ever went from active work into retirement without at least one tender tribute; the moistened eyes of Will Brodbeck yielded that tribute. He thought of his own dear old father, on the retired list, and he did not know how soon such lovely men as his dear William I. Fee and William Nast might be there!

In the Cincinnati Preachers' Meeting he was not prominent as a debater. He never did care for debating; he liked to do, to feel, to love, to enjoy, rather than to discuss; and, in large measure, this was true of him to the end. But if he did not talk much in the meeting he was a good listener; especially so when age and experience spoke. It seems invidious, and almost audacious, to mention a single incident where so many are crowding for notice. But there was one session at which addresses on

preaching were delivered by the polished and eloquent Charles H. Payne, and the intellectual, the forceful, the always convincing Bishop Foster. Dr. Payne laid stress upon the need for variety of expression in preaching, as an antidote to weariness in the hearer. It was a fine address, and this point is one, undoubtedly, to which a learner in the art should give attention. But Bishop Foster, in his colossal way, rather derided the use of any art in preaching, and said his own endeavor was to get at the truth, and then, with all his soul and mind, give it to the people, leaving every consideration of form and expression to take care of itself. By all this Will Brodbeck was unusually impressed. Here began his intense admiration for Bishop Foster, which soon deepened into lifelong love, and there can be no doubt that what the dear bishop said that day was a guiding principle with him in all his pulpit work.

Dr. Charles Parkhurst, his close New England friend, says of him in *Zion's Herald*, in a loving editorial tribute: "He was as guileless as Nathanael, as transparent as Peter, as loyal to truth and duty as Paul. We have been favored with his friendship and fellowship for ten years; we have seen him in every contingency, emergency, and crisis in which the real self appears, and we unequivocally pronounce him to have been one of the most devout, pure-minded, best-purposed men that we have ever known. He could never think an impure thought, nor plan an unfraternal or unkind act."

Nobly said, Doctor; God bless you for saying it;

and all that you and so many others found him to be in New England, he had become, to the universal knowledge of all his acquaintances, while he was still among his brethren in the West. As the oak is in the slender shoot, and the flower in the opening bulb, so the William Nast Brodbeck who so easily won your hearts in Boston was already apparent in that good-natured, whole-souled, and high-purposed young man whom so many knew and loved twenty-three years ago in Cincinnati.

His two years at Avondale were decidedly a growing period. He enjoyed this pastorate, though it was not fruitful in soul-saving. Sermons were made with great care, and were delivered to cultured and appreciative hearers. He generally read, but was never dull. His delivery was rapid, and at times impetuous. All were impressed with his earnestness, and two or three of his leading laymen constantly reported him in Cincinnati as a pulpit marvel. Good Dr. Ebersole's comment to this writer upon the two sermons with which he closed his pastorate was that "Bishop Simpson could not have preached more grandly." His last was from the text, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." That he could preach so convincingly from such a text, after having labored for two years with only four additions on probation, shows what his faith must have been, and indicates the pertinacity which in other fields won him such unusual triumph.

He was ordained an elder by Bishop Merrill, September 4, 1876, at Oxford. The Conference of 1877 was held at Xenia. Bishop Gilbert Haven presided. This noble servant of the Church was suffering at that time from the illness which was soon to culminate in death. From some of the work of the Conference he was compelled to excuse himself. But he addressed the applicants for admission, and his words of blended wit and pathos left a deep impression. All the young ministers were inspired, and those close to Brodbeck were aware that he, under the influence of this brilliant New Englander, had gotten a special uplift. The bishop could not preach Sunday morning. Our sense of regret may be imagined; but we had our compensation. The pulpit was filled by Dr. Henry Bascom Ridgaway. A marvelous sermon he gave us from the text, "The word of God is not bound." Will Brodbeck and some of his intimates sitting with him got a baptism of tears that morning which rested in benediction upon them long after the sermon was ended.

The seat of this Conference became for three years from that time the scene of our friend's labors. In response to the wish of the people, he was assigned to Trinity Church in that city, and remained, in ever-growing usefulness, for a full term. Financially it was a drop from Avondale, but in the sphere it offered to a man of his gifts, and in its general rank in the Conference, this appointment was a real promotion. He still had much of the refined element he had known in his

last charge, but there was a mixed community to draw upon, more Methodist fervor in the society itself, and a far larger church building. In the same town there was also one of the strongest churches in the Conference. First Church, Xenia, has been a great revival power; it was at that time; and the influence of this church, under the pastorate of Rev. Lucien Clark, was a help to the new pastor of Trinity. It helped him in his efforts to tone down the conservatism of that church.

His second year brought him an increase of salary. It also saw the church renovated and beautified; and still another improvement was the commodious parsonage they built. His sermons were greatly appreciated, and his addresses on public occasions, backed by so fascinating a personality, soon lifted him into popular favor. His own records show that in this church, which had before scarcely any inclination that way, he had each year a good revival interest. He enjoyed his Xenia pastorate very much. "Socially," he says, "it was a grand appointment, and it was also stimulating intellectually."

Here we find him first beginning to make an impression by his sermon upon the text, "He saved others, himself he cannot save." The sermon is copiously reported and highly commended by the Xenia papers. It is not the sermon of his later years from that text; it is only the germ of that great discourse. Not the least touching of the many tributes paid to him since his death is the remark in *Zion's Herald*, from a correspondent in

New Hampshire, who appropriately suggests that this favorite text of our friend was a striking illustration of his own life—He saved others; himself he could not save.

As a further sample of how at this early period William Nast Brodbeck was gripping popular interest, and of the sort of compliments which were strewn along his pathway, the following are given out of the great number available. An enthusiastic hearer of another denomination wrote to one of the Xenia papers: "The Thanksgiving sermon yesterday at the Presbyterian church far excelled any sermon we have had for years, in ability, style, delivery, true logical deductions, and practical hints." And here is a description of him which will be read with special interest because it depicts so minutely his character and methods at that time. It is the comment in a Xenia paper upon his lecture on the Book of Ezra:

"Mr. Brodbeck is a prompt, earnest speaker, never lacking for words to express his quickly springing thoughts, a young man of decided promise, for whom is predicted a successful future in the church. His statements are clear, and his enunciation, though rapid, is very distinct. On the cardinal points of the gospel he is always uncompromising, eliminating them from error with a hand that never lacks cunning and a heart never wanting courage. He is a gentleman of acute sensibilities. Hence the zeal, the vehemence, the rapidity, the energy characterizing all his pulpit efforts. He possesses the secret of success that

caused all ages to accord the palm of eloquence to Demosthenes—deep feeling. When a speaker understands, believes, and feels what he says, his words carry argument and conviction overcoming and irresistible."

The writer of this tribute was evidently a trained scribe, and the presumption is that he was not lacking in judgment; and when it is noted again that such tributes attended our friend from the beginning, the moment would seem to be opportune for a candid consideration of the probable influence of so much praise upon his character, his work, his aspirations.

Facts will help us a little. Certain it is that this environment did not spoil his amiable disposition; equally certain that it did not beget any undue self-confidence. He always realized his limitations; he knew very well that many ministers preached differently from himself, and, in their way, much better. He was the least opinionated of any strong man this writer has known. No minister ever courted advice more freely or paid more conscientious regard to what was said to him. With all his positiveness as to the old gospel, he was still never free from a prayerful concern in regard to his teachings, and never blind to any new light that came. He always treated his brethren with consideration, and he only asked in return that they should treat him according to his deserts. He undertook no charge in reliance upon his reputation; he always knew that he must work if he would win, in spite of the good name he had made. Pride was as far

from him in the General Conference as it was when he preached his first sermon in that little church at Piqua. He never got above his early friends. The years brought changes, and success introduced him to the favor of the great, but he carried his first friendships into every pastorate; and his greatest joy in all his success was when his own position enabled him to lift up some one else. He thought as much of some of his lowliest brethren as he ever did of any man on our Board of Bishops. He delighted in popular acclaim, yet his chief delight was in the little circle where hearts ruled. He enjoyed public honors, but his worship was always with the humble and true at his Master's feet.

To expect, however, that the place he early won for himself, and the praises which attended him, would leave him wholly without ambition would be to argue in the face of both human nature and sanctified common sense. He could not help seeing that he had a capacity for doing things, and that he was strong in the affections of many of his brethren. He could also plainly see that position offered an increase of power. To desire promotion to high place can only be wrong when there is not a full purpose to use it for the glory of God, or when the desire becomes so intense as to incite one to questionable methods. That William Nast Brodbeck ever looked one inch above the pastoral office he so greatly adorned is due to the economy and spirit of the Church he served, to the fame he won through pure-hearted work in soul saving, to kindly words dropped into his appreciative soul by

influential Church officials, to the laudations of the press, to the very atmosphere in which he necessarily had his being. If there are any who blame him for this they should go further and blame him for being so capable and so royal a man. They should blame him, indeed, for making himself, under God, so successful a Methodist preacher.

Dr. David H. Moore voices a prevalent conviction when he says, in his recent tribute in the *Western:* "There was nothing incongruous in associating his name with the most responsible office; he was equal to any duty that might be imposed. The Church would have welcomed him to the episcopacy; almost laid hands on him to make him a missionary secretary, and kept him in her eye for future honors." In a touching eulogy at his funeral, Rev. Charles L. Goodell, of Hanson Place Church, Brooklyn, one of his very closest and best loved friends, said, among other good things:

"This man was ambitious. Shall I show you the kind and temper of that ambition? On the slopes of Lebanon, in far Palestine, I received a letter from him, telling me of his election as Secretary of the Epworth League, and asking my advice about accepting it. I hurried my answer to the steamer, 'Accept at once, by all means;' but before my answer could reach him he had declined it. When I returned I said, 'Brodbeck, why did you?' And then he told me that the field which it opened was just to his liking; that he realized how wide would be his influence and possibilities for good; but the church he was serving felt that the success

of their whole enterprise depended upon his remaining with them; and he said, 'I had given my word to stand by them, and no act of mine shall harm them.' *That* was his ambition—to be true to his word, to be faithful to his trust, and so he put official preferment beneath his feet and sacrificed himself upon what seemed to him to be the altar of duty."

Commenting upon this declination at the time, Dr. James M. Buckley wrote in *The Christian Advocate*, apropos of the three declinations that had just occurred:

"The first in order of time was the declination of Rev. Dr. Brodbeck of the General Secretaryship of the Epworth League. The position is confessedly important; the wisdom of the selection universally accredited. Dr. Brodbeck is a fountain of enthusiasm, with a genius for work, equally at home in German and English, and having a constitution well adapted to endure the exposure of constant travel. Why did he decline? The sole reason assigned was his relation to the pastorate. He had accepted an appointment with the understanding that a society in an important position could be consolidated, and a much-needed church, expensive and difficult to construct, could be erected if he would give to the enterprise the prestige of his success in the Tremont Street Church, Boston, and the qualities and kind of work which had given him that success in the conversion of sinners and the edification of believers. God's blessing had rested upon it, and in a brief period it was far

advanced. To leave the church would have been to depress hope, afflict the self-sacrificing who had confided in him, and make the society ever doubtful of the constancy of a pastor, however much he might be loved and willingly obeyed.

"Dr. Brodbeck, though doubtless counting the human providence that called him elsewhere a pleasing recognition, believing that divine providence called him to remain, decided to go on with his work, and in so doing strengthened the Church universal not less than the one of which he is pastor. It is an important event of the quadrennium."

The limits of space require that his career after he left Xenia shall be sketched more briefly. He was now the most popular young man in the Cincinnati Conference, and his fame arose from well-earned success. If any new enterprise shall appear calling for careful management, offering a good chance for development, requiring a winning personality, and demanding especially the services of one who can be relied upon to mold and guide according to the best traditions of Methodism, the man selected for this task is likely to be William Nast Brodbeck. Such an enterprise did appear.

Under the pastorate of Rev. William A. Robinson, that hive of religious activity, the Central Church, Springfield, O., had become so full that there had to be a swarm. About one hundred and sixty persons had left the mother church just before the Conference of 1880, over which Bishop Peck presided at Middletown, and, having secured a large lot in a desirable location, had begun to

plan for a fine church building. Among these were several families of wealth, notably the family of P. P. Mast, a successful manufacturer and one of the leading Methodists in Ohio. To the new church Mr. Mast was a large contributor in all ways, and he had many, equally worthy and generous, to cooperate with him. This new society must have a pastor. In its formative period it must be molded into a Methodist society according to the pattern of the fathers; yet the man to do this must have qualities which will lift up this new cause in the estimation of the general public. Who shall undertake this work?

The people said it must be Brother Brodbeck; the bishop said the same; most of the preachers said amen, and this concurrent voice proved to be the voice of God. A beautiful church was built, capable of seating, when every part was used, at least thirteen hundred people, and subscriptions were obtained to cover its cost, nearly all of these being paid within the three years of his pastorate. This new church became the wonder of the town and a praise on the lips of all the Methodists of that section. He himself modestly summarizes the other results by saying: "Had two remarkable revivals; 246 received on probation, 302 by letter. These letters came from 14 different denominations. Began with 162 members; when I left there were 579, a gain of 417."

Here was a triumph such as few ministers ever gain, and naturally it made almost anything possible in a ministerial way to the man who had brought

it to pass. His next appointment was to First Church, Urbana, about ten miles from Springfield. This place has long been a stronghold of Methodism, and is known as the location of one of our great Methodist camp meetings. The Conference of 1883 was held at Hamilton. Bishop Foster presided, and signalized the occasion by his great sermon on "What is Man?" He also, in response to the demands of the people of that church, sent William Nast Brodbeck to the scene of his very greatest revival. He was, as usual, his own evangelist, and meetings were held continuously for thirteen weeks. Three hundred and twenty-eight professed conversion, and in one year there were two hundred and fifty-four additions to the church. The Sunday before Conference he received a class of one hundred and seventeen into full membership. After the revival he took a short vacation while the church was being repaired and adorned. What a pity he did not rest a little oftener!

He remained in Urbana one year only. He was scarcely settled there when he was invited to Roberts Park Church, Indianapolis. If he went some one else must take the responsibility. That was his way; he would rather trust God and the Church than his own understanding. Brodbeck left it with Bishop Foster; the bishop left it with the Urbana church, and Brodbeck stayed to have his great revival.

From an account he gave of this work to the Boston Preachers' Meeting some years later it appears as though he met unusual difficulties. Part

of what he said was reported in *Zion's Herald* as follows:

"At first only doubtful characters came to the altar, in whom the public had no confidence. Many were offended, and some said, 'Do you know those people that are coming to the altar?'

"He replied, 'Yes, I know them. They are immortal souls for whom Christ died.'

"When the meetings had run three weeks one of his leading members came to him and said, 'I think it is time these meetings were stopped; we have held them three weeks, and we want to hold a fair and have some entertainments.'

"The pastor firmly and promptly replied, 'You may do as you please, but these meetings will not stop.'

"His heart was broken, and so was the heart of one of the devout female members. They expressed their feelings to each other and parted. They both spent the night in prayer, and at ten o'clock the next morning the pastor gained the evidence that his prayers were answered.

"After dinner he went out and met the devout lady on the street. Her face was shining with the glory of God.

"She said, 'The victory is coming.'

"'How do you know?'

"'I got the evidence at ten o'clock this morning, after spending a whole night in prayer.'

"This was the very time that the pastor gained the evidence. That very night while the pastor was preaching a young man arose and came to

the altar; others followed, so that the pastor had to stop preaching. God was among the people in power; the church was quickened, backsliders were reclaimed, hundreds of sinners were converted. Places of amusement and saloons were closed, and the face of the community was changed."

Fresh from such an ingathering of souls, why is it that at the Hillsboro Conference, at the end of one year, he is removed to another charge? It is because Bishop Merrill, who is a very wise and a very firm man, has Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, to provide for. Brodbeck has no thought beyond Urbana. The people of that place are up in arms; the papers are flaming with protests; but Bishop Merrill thinks he is right. He wants for Walnut Hills, which is now the most important church in Cincinnati, a minister of a certain kind. He believes he has his hand on that kind of a minister, and he sends him.

From that pulpit the brilliant Dr. J. H. Bayliss had just retired to assume the editorship of the *Western Christian Advocate.* Those immediately preceding Dr. Bayliss in the Walnut Hills Church had been Dr. Henry B. Ridgaway, Dr. Henry Baker, and our splendid missionary secretary, Dr. A. B. Leonard. A distinguished succession; but Will Brodbeck was so manifestly in the apostolic succession that he had nothing to fear in contrast with any of them; while the personal friendship of those grand men was a constant help to him. To Dr. Bayliss he was especially indebted. He and his family were still attending that church. How

easily the good doctor could have hindered! But he helped, and his help was received—O how gratefully! The first winter witnesses a remarkable revival—very remarkable indeed for that church; and in a paper called the *Methodist*—a little paper published by the church, and of which the pastor was editor—our friend tells us that this revival began from a watch-night sermon preached by Dr. Bayliss. He also gives great credit for the work done at Walnut Hills to Dr. D. J. Starr, his presiding elder. In twenty months he received into that church two hundred and thirty-eight, and the church edifice was completed and beautified at a cost of six thousand dollars.

## IV.

In the full tide of his success at Walnut Hills he was called to Boston. The moving cause was Bishop Foster. The people of his church were not reconciled to losing him, and he himself had no desire for a change. He could have finished his pastorate as successfully as he had begun and continued it, and after that might have had the best things the West could offer. But the judgment of the bishop was accepted on all sides as an intimation from the Head of the Church. Bishop Foster had influence not only in the Tremont Street Church, but in the church at Walnut Hills. Brodbeck could not withstand him, and he was influenced, moreover, by loving care for an invalid companion. He was glad to go to Boston since Bishop Foster felt sure he ought to go; especially

glad as physicians assured him the change would be beneficial to his wife and children.

Professor Rishell said at the funeral that probably not less than ten thousand people were mourning with us in Ohio. That many at least followed him in thought to his new sphere in New England. There was a twofold concern. None doubted his ability, none could question his past success; the only question was, Would he sustain himself quite so well in an entirely different environment? And if he was on trial, so, in the judgment of his thousands of Western friends, were Boston and New England. This, too, is a good place for his biographer to say that the issue, as it is known to us all, and known throughout our Methodism, was no more creditable to William Nast Brodbeck than to the people who so generously received him.

The record of his work in Boston is so recent that it scarcely needs an allusion. At Tremont Street he followed in a line of ministers such as few churches enjoy, and had among his hearers some of the most cultured Methodists in a city of culture. He had to work, too, in harness that was strange to him. In the West our pastors ask people to unite with the Church at any time when it seems opportune. They strike when the iron is hot. Many unite on probation as their first step; after that it seems easier to bow at the altar as penitents. After every sermon to the unsaved, and often after the morning sermon, those who have been moved to consider their ways are invited to come forward and enroll themselves as applicants

for church membership. This gives one a chance to reap what he has sown, and to all our Western ministers it is a constant incentive to directness and urgency. How will a man like Brodbeck ever adapt himself to the "once-a-month" custom? So many wondered. But he did adapt himself to it for a time; then, having brought his church to his own way of thinking, he changed this system—something which he always thought might be done with advantage in our Eastern work generally.

Just what he accomplished at this church others shall tell us. Here is a suggestion of how he changed the church in its social life. His loving admirer, George F. Washburn, said, at the memorial service of the Boston Preachers' Meeting: "I first knew him as a pastor. The first time I met him was in Msechanic Building on the closing night of the great revival conducted by Sam Jones. It was at the close of the service that I was introduced to him on the platform, as a young Methodist who had lately moved into his district and who ought to attend his church. He greeted me cordially, as he always greeted everyone, and when I said I had often thought of attending his church but had understood it was a spiritual refrigerator, Dr. Brodbeck threw back his head and laughed, saying, 'Well, my brother, whatever it may have been in the past, you will find it warm enough for you now; I want you to make our church your home.'" Probably this church had gotten a reputation for coldness beyond its deserts; many churches do, and often competing churches of the same denomination are the

graceless maligners. But, as Dr. Brodbeck said, Tremont Street was all right then, whatever it might have been previously; for Mr. Washburn adds, regarding his first visit, "We were so impressed with the sermon we heard, together with the homelike, cordial atmosphere of the place of worship, that we soon surrendered our letters and were safely and pleasantly anchored there."

How his meetings were conducted, and how thoroughly his first New England church was transformed into a revival church, Dr. Parkhurst reminds us. "We recall," he says, "the first time we heard him preach and conduct an altar service, ten years ago, in Tremont Street Church. It was an evening service—a short sermon to the unconverted, with an altar service of unusual length—and the faithful soul winner did not let go of the congregation until the altar was crowded with seekers. We never saw his equal in unyielding and constraining power at an altar service."

Naturally, on the Sunday morning after his death this church held a memorial service, and in his tender and comprehensive sermon Dr. Pickles said: "Tremont Street Church has a special interest in the recollection of this man of God. While he was here the pastoral limit was lengthened to five years and he stayed with you through them all, the happiest years in all his ministry. Six hundred and twelve names on the probation list in his own handwriting attest the breadth and depth of his work in this parish. His first sermon was preached May 2, 1886. The text was 2 Cor. v, 20, 'Now then we are

ambassadors for Christ,' etc. The list of probationers begins with May 16, 1886, within two weeks of his entrance upon the pastorate. Every month is represented from the beginning to the close, with the exception of August when he was away from the city, and his last entrance was March 16, 1891, within three weeks of his removal by expiration of the pastoral limit. Such a record is phenomenal, and is a lofty challenge to all his ministerial brethren."

Leaving Tremont Street Church with this record, he was assigned to Brookline. A call to First Church, Baltimore, he declined at this time. It offered a splendid field for work and a larger salary than Brookline could pay. But his friends in Boston urged that he was peculiarly fitted for the Brookline appointment. The society was small, but the community was one for which Methodism ought to make a more pretentious bid. There were moneyed men interested. They were prepared to give largely, and a fine church edifice had been projected. The feeling was that Dr. Brodbeck, with his large acquaintance in Boston, with the prestige of his Tremont Street success, and with the qualities he had shown for drawing and molding, could insure the success of this enterprise. This feeling was general throughout New England, and he yielded to it; being all the more inclined to do so from the fact that at Springfield, O., eleven years before, he had undertaken a similar work, and had built up, from a small beginning, one of the strongest churches in the Cincinnati Conference.

Doubtless, too, he was influenced by his strong attachment for Boston and its people. Never was man transplanted to any new soil who became more passionately in love with his new surroundings than did he. Nor is this surprising. Homes and hearts had opened to him on every hand. He had been treated by everyone with the utmost forbearance and generosity. His faults, if he showed any, had been overlooked; his limitations, to which he was never blind himself, had scarcely been seen by others, or, if seen, had been covered at once by a cloak of love. Everywhere appreciation and warmth had met him; there were no thorns in his path, only the roses of loving-kindness. Especially marked had been the favor of his ministerial brethren toward him, and this he returned with all the wealth and strength of a nature born to love and to love only. Why should he care to leave Boston when Boston had been so gracious and so generous to him? He would not leave; he would stay, and still give to New England Methodism the best there was in him.

In his Brookline charge he brought to bear upon the problems which arose the same qualities, the same consecration, the same industry, the same Holy Ghost power, which had marked his ministry elsewhere. He naturally supposed that he must still be true to himself, and he was. He preached the same gospel, followed the same methods of church work, mingled with the people in the same way—prayed the same, worked the same, loved the same. The first year resulted, as his own record

shows, in one hundred and sixty-five conversions. This was a remarkable work for a place like Brookline, and there was another revival the year following.

Meanwhile, a magnificent church had begun to rise upon its foundations, and generous men were making large contributions. The largest sums were obtained through the personal influence of this magnetic pastor. At the close of his ministry in Brookline this imposing edifice—one of the finest in New England Methodism—was ready for the plastering, and his own note is that at that time "there had been raised and paid on the property not less than ninety thousand dollars." The work was finished under his successor, Rev. William I. Haven, and most fittingly, after our friend's death, was there held in this beautiful church, with Mr. Haven in charge, a tender memorial service.

It seemed expedient that the Brookline pastorate should conform to the three-year limit, and by Bishop FitzGerald, at the Conference of 1894, William Nast Brodbeck was assigned to the last charge in his earthly ministry. Here, again, as had so often occurred before, the responsibility for his field of labor rested solely with the bishop; and who shall say that this bishop was not as really guided by the divine hand as were any of those who had determined his other appointments? He was not expected at Trinity Church, Charlestown; neither was he expecting to go there. But what a pleasant pastorate he had in that difficult field! How heartily, when they awoke to their good fortune, the

surprised people made him welcome! How he strengthened their church and enriched their lives and blessed their homes; and how constantly, in return, had they breathed and lavished blessings upon him and his; the increasing, ever-growing generosity and sympathy of four years, crowned and completed at last by tender ministry in his illness, by tearful outpourings of love at his funeral, and by the most generous care, since then, for his sorrowing family!

During his last pastorate, as in every previous one, improvements were made in the church property. He had built two churches, and every other church he had greatly beautified. What he did in this direction at Charlestown is finely commemorated in the resolutions passed, after his death, by the Trinity Official Board. In these his brethren generously say: "We shall ever hold in grateful remembrance his unselfish devotion, generous contributions, personal sacrifices, intense interest, and patient and successful efforts to beautify and adorn our church edifice, which will stand for years to come as a monument to his fidelity and devotion."

What he was in his relation to the interests of Christ's kingdom outside the pale of his pastoral work is all very well known. Space forbids even a mention of the many organizations to which he belonged; but what he had been as the efficient secretary of the Board of Trustees of Boston University, and as president from the beginning of the New England Deaconess Home, Training School and Hospital, that he had been, also, as strength and

time permitted, to a dozen other societies, some of them denominational, some of them interdenominational.

Before the great public of Boston he stood for many years as the representative pastor of Methodism. On the platform of Music Hall, Fanueil Hall, and Tremont Temple, he elbowed the best men of the city, and when he spoke it was always to the honor of his Church. If Boston treated him well, so did he give her noble treatment in return. He made a large place for himself, and he filled it with good deeds and noble words. Since his death it has been remarked that William Nast Brodbeck was to a part of Boston what Phillips Brooks was to the whole of it, and that to his own denomination in that city he was what Dr. A. J. Gordon was to the Baptist denomination.

## V.

For two months there had been before him the possibility of having to say yes or no to a second call from First Church, Baltimore, and, in addition, the dear wife had been ill. All the time, too, he had been hard at work. Nothing had been neglected, no engagement missed, no relaxation of effort in any direction. He was very tired, but he kept at it like a martyr. Withal he was a cheerful martyr, and, after he had finally decided that he would go to Baltimore should Bishop Merrill appoint him, he was more buoyant in spirits than he had been for a long time.

A pathetic scene is it when he gathers his family

about him to announce to them his decision. That decision had been reached after long praying, after earnest and patient consultation with his friends, after the deepest searching of heart, after groaning, after tears, and upon his knees. The matter is now settled, but his wife and children do not know how it is settled. He has called them together to learn this pleasing secret. There is no absentee—Edith, Bessie, Paul, Mabel, the dear wife, are all there, expectant, wondering, under an unusual restraint. They know of this noble man's struggle—what such a battle must have meant to him—and they are reverently attentive to his every word.

It is a religious assembly—one of the holiest ever held in a Methodist parsonage. First, he reads to them from Meyer's little book on *Christian Living*, that heavenly chapter on "Guidance." He reads the entire chapter, covering eighteen pages. Then he begins to unfold a package of letters. These contain the advice he has sought from chosen friends. Quite a number of us figured in this episode. Every letter is read, and some of them are read between the lines. Much of the time there has been weeping; his own eyes have moistened more than once; and now he tells them he must go to Baltimore. They have waited for him seven years; he must go to them; he can do no otherwise. Then he prays, and then, still in tears, they all rejoice.

The days after this were unusually happy days; but O, our friend was so tired, and the feeling of exhaustion settled upon him more and more. For-

tunately he is expecting an evangelist—one of the rarest occurrences in his ministry; perhaps, when Brother Gillam takes hold of the work he can ease up a little? Yes, he shall indeed.

It is Sunday and he preaches two sermons. In the morning his text is, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved;" at night, "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" two characteristic sermons, and although he is very weary he preaches with unusual earnestness and effect. He is complimented, as usual, at the close of his day's work, and his remark to one of his brethren is, "Well, I've done my best, and had I known it was to be my last Sunday I do not see how I could have preached more faithfully."

Sunday afternoon is spent in loving fellowship with his family. He converses hopefully about Baltimore; he intends there to begin his ministry anew; he intends to master all worry, to give up some of his outside work, to be more at home, to be holier and happier!

Monday he is at the Preachers' Meeting. In the afternoon he attends a Committee on the Deaconess Hospital work. At night he discloses to his Official Board his purpose to reluctantly leave them, and comes home filled anew with admiration for that body of men. Tuesday he presided at a meeting of the Board of Managers of the Deaconess Home. O, what a busy life! What a pity this tired man could not have rested a little!

Tuesday night he prayed at the revival meeting,

and introduced Rev. Ralph Gillam to his people. Wednesday, though feeling very strange and weak, he is at two revival services. That night he went to bed aching and greatly debilitated. His dear wife is ill; now her husband seems marked for illness. He is, alas! and the next morning he does not rise. He has gone to the bed of death.

The next Sunday finds him suffering intensely from what are thought to be rheumatic pains. Other complications arise. Typhoid fever is diagnosed. Sunday, January 30, he begins to be delirious. Delirium increases. He has the best medical care, and the most skillful and tender nursing. With him are several nurses from the Deaconess Hospital. They might well tend him in love considering how he had loved and labored for the institution to which they belonged!

In his delirium his talk is all of good things. Now he is in Baltimore; now at a meeting of the Trustees of Boston University; now at the Deaconess Home; now in some pulpit preaching to workingmen; and ever and anon he prays and sings. "Jesus, Lover of my soul," is sung in such stentorian tones that it is heard through thick walls in the next house.

His physicians are fearful, but they try to quiet him and hope for a favorable turn. Tuesday night he wants Edith to come near, and in a lucid moment he tells her he does not think he shall recover. Wednesday night he wants Edith again, and sends by her a sacred message to his dear wife. Thursday morning, through a sudden failure

of the heart, he begins to sink, and at 10:15 that great heart is still!

An immense concourse gathered at the funeral. Some thought it the greatest Methodist funeral Boston had known since Gilbert Haven was buried. But the best compliment was when some one observed that there was such a religious feeling in the service that it could easily have been turned into a great revival meeting. His presiding elder, Rev. Dr. Eaton, was in charge. Dr. W. F. Warren, President of Boston University, magnified the ability and fidelity exhibited by our friend in the many public duties that devolved upon him. In being elected as the first General Secretary of the Epworth League, in his election to the last two General Conferences and in the leadership accorded to him there, in the deaconess movement, and as chairman of the Committee on Missions; in the magnificent vote received at the General Conference of 1896 for missionary secretary—in all these, and in many other ways, the Church had honored him, and in recent years the eyes of the Church had been more and more upon him.

Bishop Mallalieu said: "The more I think of this dear brother, the more I wish and pray that I may be like him. Why could not heaven wait for at least twenty years while this blessed herald of salvation might still enrich the world with his prayers, his toil, his love?" From Professor Rishell and Dr. Goodell quotations appear elsewhere. His intimate friend of recent years, Dr. S. F. Upham, of Drew Theological Seminary, spoke very tenderly,

saying: "He was a model minister, and if I were to characterize at length an ideal man I do not know how I could better do it than by describing the qualities of head and heart possessed by this dear friend of mine."

He was a voluminous correspondent. His letters were models of good sense, good feeling, sound piety, and bubbling humor, and they were a mirror in which his soul was seen. Happy they who were recipients of such letters, and those thus favored were not a few. His letters to me would make several large volumes. I have not quoted from them, and have scarcely let myself be seen in all I have written. But in closing I do crave the privilege—in tribute to a friendship of nearly a quarter of a century—of giving just one precious scrap. It is from the close of a letter of eight large pages, written the week before his fatal illness. "I am all worn out," he says. "Mrs. B. is better. She has been critically ill. Write me. Always, and with undying love, yours, Will." I did write to him, and have now fulfilled the more delicate obligation of writing about him.

HENRY TUCKLEY.

# I.

# The Marks of the Lord Jesus.

"From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."—Gal. vi, 17.

# SERMONS AND ADDRESSES.

## I.

### The Marks of the Lord Jesus.

THESE are the pathetic—yet commanding—words of Paul addressed to the church at Galatia. To fully comprehend their force and significance we must understand the circumstances which called them forth. The apostle had founded this church, and from the beginning his relation to it had been peculiar. It was here that he was detained for some time on his second visit by his special affliction which he designates as "his temptation in the flesh," and which he says was of such a character that they might well have rejected and despised him. But this they did not do. On the contrary, they received him as the angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Indeed, he says, so great was their love and zeal in his behalf that, had it been possible, they would gladly have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him. But when he passed through this same city three years afterward, on his way to Ephesus, a great change had taken place in their warmth and affection toward him. And now, after the lapse of another three years, he learns while at Corinth that they are in danger of entire apostasy.

To make matters more painful still, this change

in their feeling toward him had been brought about by Judaizing teachers, who had come down from Jerusalem and had taught them that their Christianity was defective; that the Gentiles could be saved only by becoming Jews: by submitting to the severe rite of circumcision, and adopting all the ritualism of the Jerusalem church. Furthermore, to help their cause along, they had attacked him personally. They declared that he was a spurious apostle; that he had never seen the Lord, but had received his gospel from men; and that his doctrine of justification by faith was simply a spurious gospel; that by it he was overthrowing the law of Moses and subverting the truth as it was in Jesus. Now, that he may defend himself against such attacks and at the same time save these Christians from the evil influences of these false teachers, he writes this grand epistle.

And what a marvelous epistle it is! From that hour until this it has been the New Testament's great protest against formalism and ritualism, and the Magna Charta of the doctrine of salvation by faith. It asserts the life and power of religion as against its mere form. It centers true religion in the heart, and makes its externals merely the outflow of that divine internal power. Hence it was the favorite epistle of Luther in his contests with Rome. From the moment when, in the eternal city, he laboriously worked his way up Pilate's staircase on his knees, and heard the divine voice whispering to his soul, "The just shall live by

faith," from that moment this grand epistle became his meat and drink. He says of it, "It is my epistle; I have betrothed myself to it; it is my wife." Now, in closing this marvelous epistle, the apostle uses these words: "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." In other words, he says to them: "These Judaizing teachers simply want to glory in the circumcision of your flesh; in that outward sign of your allegiance to Christ. But I glory in nothing save the cross; not in an outward circumcision, but an inward crucifixion. And yet I am not without the outward badge of my allegiance to Christ, 'for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus;' therefore, 'henceforth let no man trouble me.'"

That we may be profited by these heroic words, I want to notice, in the first place,

What were these "marks of the Lord Jesus?"

Quite a difference of opinion has existed on this point, and perhaps no one can say definitely just what these brands were. Some have thought the apostle means to say that he had the name of the

Lord Jesus tattooed on his person—after the manner of the slaves of antiquity, who thus indicated their allegiance to a certain master. Others have thought that he refers here to his peculiar affliction; his thorn in the flesh. As this was doubtless some physical defect or weakness which had come to him as a result of his conversion on the highway at noonday it might well be termed a mark of the Lord Jesus. But I believe his thought is more comprehensive than either of these interpretations would indicate. I believe by the term "marks," as here used, he refers to the results or effects of all the afflictions and sufferings which he had undergone for Christ's sake. When he wrote this letter he had already been a disciple for twenty years. Although there were still ten years more of suffering and trial to be added before his work would be finished, yet he even now bears upon his person the evidences of hard work and rough usage. And in these words I think he speaks in anticipation of all that is to come upon him in the years remaining.

He is growing old; his form is already bent, his face is scarred and disfigured, his limbs are weak and decrepit—and all this is the result of his sufferings for Christ's sake. And when we come to look at his history we need not wonder that such was the case. At one time he writes to the church at Corinth an account of his sufferings. Let us look for a moment at that marvelous record: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have

been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." What a record of pain and suffering is that! Think of a man being whipped upon his naked back five times and each time receiving thirty-nine stripes; think of a man being beaten three times with rods; think of a man being stoned until his persecutors were sure he was dead, and then being dragged out of the city and left at the roadside like a dog; think of a man suffering three shipwrecks within thirty years and being a night and a day on the deep without rescue, with nothing between him and a watery grave but a mere plank; think of a man being in perils of robbers, in perils of the wilderness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness; think of a man having upon him the burden of all the churches daily—and think you not his body will bear marks?

And then beyond all this, remember those three days of blindness at Damascus; the fighting with beasts at Ephesus; the escape in a basket through a window by the wall at Damascus; and tell me: think you his body would not bear the marks? Ah! how eloquently the welts made by the Roman lictor's rods, the red lines made by the nearly two

hundred stripes laid on him by the Jews, the scars of the stones that had beaten him senseless, the deep furrows left by the manacles and stocks, the wrinkles and tan made by the shipwreck and exposure—how eloquently all these told of sufferings and hardships! What marks in the body these left as their lasting heritage! But this leads me to notice, in the second place,

How he came to have these marks.

If the story of his marks be pathetic the story of the causes which led to them is more pathetic still. Why was he beaten by the Romans? Why was he scourged by the Jews? Why was he stoned at Lystra? Why was he cast to the wild beasts at Ephesus? Certainly not because of any evil he had done; not because of any law he had violated; not because of any treason against his nation or people, but simply because of the truth which he preached: simply because of his doctrine of salvation by grace; simply because he proclaimed the great fact of salvation without the deeds of the law. Had he gone around lecturing on the law of Moses, had he taught the necessity of circumcision, had he proclaimed a salvation by works, he would never have been torn by beasts, bruised with stones, nor lacerated by whip or rod.

What does he say to this very church, to whom he had been accused of preaching the necessity of circumcision when in other churches? "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offense of the cross ceased." It was because he did not preach

circumcision, it was because he proclaimed salvation through a crucified Saviour alone, that he suffered all of these things. It was because he could say to the Corinthians, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified;" it was because he could say to these Galatians, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;" it was because of this that these marks were upon him. If he had been willing to give up that truth; if at Philippi he had lowered the standard a little; if at Lystra he had admitted that he might be wrong; if at Ephesus he had kept back this obnoxious doctrine, he would have escaped all of these disasters. It was his heroic championship of the atonement of Christ; it was his unflinching devotion to the great truth of a crucified Saviour; it was his determined and unceasing proclamation of salvation through faith in Him, that had brought upon him all these sufferings which had so indelibly left their marks upon his body. And what a lesson and example this is for us to-day.

In these latter days, when the tendency is toward an obliteration of all distinctions between truth and error; when the cry is for liberality in matters of belief; when men are denying the Lord who bought them, sneering at his atonement, repudiating all need of a divine Saviour, and yet are demanding to be recognized as Christians, and to have their errors respected as truths; in these days, I say, how much we need the spirit of the grand old apostle, that will suffer anything rather than sacrifice

the truth as it is in Jesus. O how his heroic fidelity to the truth puts to shame the temporizing, compromising spirit to be found in many so-called Christians in this latter part of the nineteenth century! May God give to his Church more of this heroic, self-sacrificing spirit. But notice now, in the third place,

The value of these marks to the apostle.

This has been somewhat intimated in what has already been said. But notice the thought more fully. They served to him a threefold purpose.

1. They were the badge of his devotion to Christ.

This is indicated by the very word "marks" itself. In the original the word is *stigmata*, which signifies a brand burned or tattooed upon the flesh as a sign of ownership. In ancient times it was customary for masters thus to brand their slaves; in some cases it was done simply as a mark of ownership and in others as a mark of disgrace, because they had sought to run away. From this usage comes our English word "stigma"—disgrace. Hence the apostle by the use of this term means to say that these marks in his body branded him as the slave of Christ; and this Paul was glad to be, as such he was glad to be known. For, after all, what is the essence of slavery? What is it that constitutes slavery? Is it not the complete surrender of the will to another? The slave has no will but that of his master. And this was exactly Paul's condition in his relation to his Lord. He had surrendered his will entirely to Christ; he had consecrated soul and body to him. In speaking of him

he could say, "Whose I am, and whom I serve." He could even say, "For to me to live is Christ," "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And these marks on his body were the external evidence of this great fact.

When we see the hard and calloused hand of the toiler, the stoop and pale face of the scholar, the weather-beaten face of the sailor, or the scarred limbs of the soldier, we need no further evidence of their devotion to their calling. And such were these scars to Paul. Hence he was proud of them; proud of them because they were the marks of the Lord Jesus. One might say to him, "Paul, it is a most disgraceful thing to be whipped. Why, you have on your back the brand of infamy." But he joyfully cries, "No; I have on my back the marks of the Lord Jesus." Another might say, "Why, Paul, look at your wrists; there are the deep lines around them where the manacles have been. You have the disgraceful marks of the fetters upon you." But he triumphantly exclaims, "You are mistaken; these are only the marks of the Lord Jesus!" Yea, these were the marks of his devotion to Christ.

He had none of these when as a young man he sat at Gamaliel's feet. Perhaps there never was a ruddier-complexioned, fairer-skinned, or more light-hearted youth than he was then. Perhaps there never was one who was freer from care, and whose prospects for a successful and easy life were brighter than his were then. For he himself tells us, "I profited in the Jews' religion above many

my equals." All these marks of suffering had come to him since that marvelous change in his life which he so vividly describes, as he says, "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, I conferred not with flesh and blood." All had come to him since that memorable hour when, on the highway near Damascus, he had cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the Lord had said to Ananias, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

2. They were the pledge of his continued fidelity.

Not only were these marks the badge of past devotion, but also the pledge of future fidelity. The slave was branded not only to show that he was a slave, but also that he should continue one forever. And these marks were the pledge that Paul was his Master's forever. How could he ever turn aside from the Master for whom he had suffered so much? Should such a thought ever come to him how these scars would shame him! If you want to induce men to desert from our army today go to the young recruit, who has never fought a battle, never received a wound. Do not go to the old battle-scarred veteran. Your efforts will not succeed with him. He will spurn your advances, and showing his wounds will say, "Think you! I have not suffered all this only to desert my colors now." And such is the language of Paul in the text. These are the ringing words of a man who has not only hoisted his colors but has nailed them irrevocably to the mast; yea, has driven the nails through and through.

The grand old hero says here to all—to enemies and friends—"There is no use in your trying to turn me back. You have no raw recruit before you. I have fought in the battle. I have been wounded in the conflict. I have tested and tried my captain in actual war. Look at the scars I have on me—and I am willing to have a great many more! Do you think for a moment that I am going to turn back now? Never; never." O what a ring of triumph there is in his words! Although badly wounded, and with scars upon him that he will carry to his grave, he stands in the presence of friends and enemies a conscious victor. The question of his fidelity to his Lord is settled forever, and these marks on his body are the perpetual pledge of it.

3. They were emphatic protests against criticism. Not only were these marks the badge of devotion, and the pledge of continued fidelity; they were also living protests against the carpings and croakings of men. The slave was branded to show not only that he was a slave, that he was to continue one forever, and that he belonged to a certain master, but also that no other one had any right to touch him or to compel his service. And so these marks of Paul were a warning to all men to let him alone. What right had any man to question his authority? What right had any man to impugn his motives? What had his enemies to show, in demonstration of their devotion to Jesus, as compared with him? These very Judaizing teachers who were stealing the affection of his con-

verts from him, who were bewitching them, who were removing them from the truth, what had they done for Christ? What marks of devotion could they show? Were they not such as they were through fear of persecution? Were they not even now using the offense of the cross to frighten these Galatian converts into following their teachings? Why, then, should they be heard rather than he? Why should they deny his apostleship, sneer at his authority, and defy his influence? Why should he be compelled to defend himself against their assaults, in the face of his past record of suffering?

It is as though he said to the Galatians—and to all others—"Come near, all ye who question my authority to preach and teach, and listen to the voice of my scarred and bruised body. Every limb speaks of my divine embassy. Do you doubt my apostleship? Look at these hands, and see around these wrists the marks of the chain. Do you doubt my apostleship? Look at my uncovered head and trace the indentations made by the stones. Do you doubt my apostleship? Look at my feet, still seamed by the pressure of the stocks; aye, look at my back, where the welts still remain —produced by the scourge; and see in these at what a price I have been serving, and am still prepared to serve, the Lord Jesus. Look at all this, and then let me alone; trouble me no more." Ah, do not the apostle's words carry us back in thought to something that occurred a few years before he wrote them? Does not the servant here

remind us of his Lord? Do we not recall a Sabbath evening when the disciples were gathered, according to their custom, and the risen Saviour entered and, addressing the doubting Thomas, called his attention to his pierced hands and wounded side, saying, "Be no longer faithless, but believing?" And so Paul says, "Look; look at the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body and trouble me no more." Ah, what weight his words have, "Henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

If on to-morrow you should go to the Soldiers' Home at Chelsea, and should see there a man who had never scented gunpowder on the field of conflict; who had never bared his breast to bayonet or bullet; who during the struggle for our national life had, cowardly, remained at home, away from all danger; if you should see such a one attacking the character of one of the old veterans there, whose missing limb or missing eye or scarred features proclaim his heroism and fidelity in the hour of his country's danger, if you should hear such a one calling in question the loyalty and heroism of that old veteran, would you not be indignant? And would you not be ready to say to the old hero, as he might attempt to defend himself against the unjust attack, "You have no need to defend yourself; your wounded limbs, your scarred and disfigured features, are more eloquent than words in your defense?" Ah, my brethren, there is an authority and independency which comes from long and faithful service in any good cause.

During the days of slavery in our country, when that grand old hero, William Lloyd Garrison, rose to speak men listened because they remembered the chains and the mob, the years of suffering and heroism, which were behind him because of his devotion to the cause of the downtrodden; and they said, "He has a right to speak;" and his words had weight and force. When the aged Christian, whose gray hairs and trembling limbs tell of years of faithful, devoted service in the cause of his Master, rises to speak in the religious service, men are quiet and reverent, for they instinctively feel, "That man has a right to tell of his faith in and devotion to Christ. Through a long life he has been faithful to his Master." When that magnificent old hero —the greatest of modern times—our Missionary Bishop to Africa, goes up and down our land telling of his needs and the needs of his work, men listen, and open wide their purses, because behind him they see years of self-denying devotion, years of hardship endured for the name of the Lord Jesus; and they say, "Let the old hero speak; he has a right to challenge the attention of the civilized universe." What matters it if small men criticise; if little men who have never sacrificed a pleasure or endured a pang for the Master snap and snarl at his heels. The old hero goes grandly on his heroic course, saying, "Don't bother me; attend to your own small affairs. I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." And thus it was with the grand old apostle. He could afford to let men talk, criticise, and defame. These marks

on his body were his silent defenders, and living, burning protests against their words.

And, finally, let me ask: Have we any of the marks of the Lord Jesus? Every man bears marks of some kind to-day. Ah! how many are bearing upon their bodies the marks of sin. As I pass along our streets and see, every day, prematurely old men, men with bodies all bloated, with faces disfigured, and with limbs almost paralyzed by dissipation and excesses, I know that these are the slaves of sin, for upon their bodies are the marks of Satan. And how many to-day are bearing the marks of their devotion to mammon. Early and late, through cold and heat, through wet and dry, through wind and frost, they toil for the things which perish with the using, until the pale cheek, the sunken eye, the wrinkled brow, the haggard look, all proclaim their slavery to the love of gain. Have we, as the disciples of Christ, any of the marks of the Lord Jesus upon us? Ah, when the service of the world is in question how men lavish their health and strength, but when the service of Christ is submitted how chary they are! Six days in the week it is never too wet, too windy or too cold to prosecute a bargain. But on the Sabbath it is often such unfavorable weather that men cannot leave their homes for God's house, or God's work.

How significant the question, Have we, as the disciples of Christ, any of the marks of the Lord Jesus? True, we live in an age when physical penalties for Christ's sake are not often endured. In the reign of Henry II some thirty learned men who were

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bold enough to preach the truth were branded with hot irons and then banished from the country; and in many ways since then God's faithful followers in various parts of the world have been called to be partakers of Christ's sufferings. Now it is a time of rest from such persecutions, and yet there are marks of the Lord Jesus which you and I may bear to-day. To all his disciples he says, as he said to the sons of Zebedee, "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." The cup that he would have us drink with him is one of sorrow for the sins of men. His baptism is that of pity for the misery of our fellows; of yearning over souls that perish. This will not come upon us without costing many a pang. If we receive it there will be ease to surrender, gain and credit to renounce, and self to be constantly crucified. And hence it comes to pass that there are still marks of the Lord Jesus which we may bear in our bodies.

There are traces of physical weariness and exhaustion caused by self-denying devotion to the service of the Church. There are deep wrinkles on the brow carved by continuous study and anxiety for the kingdom of Jesus. There are prematurely gray heads and furrowed cheeks occasioned by unselfish and heroic efforts to overcome the tide of worldliness in Zion, and to bring victory to Israel's side. There are broken hearts and burdened spirits in homes where all is opposed to Christ. All these are the marks of the Lord Jesus. And what an honor these are! And what a reward they bring!

What did these marks bring to Paul? Chiefly the right and privilege of still more heroic service.

It is said that when the Spartan king advanced against the enemy he had always with him some one who had been crowned in the public games of Greece. And they tell us that a Lacedæmonian, when large sums were offered him not to enter the Olympic lists, scornfully refused them. Having with much difficulty thrown his antagonist in wrestling the question was put to him, "Spartan, what will you get by this victory?" He answered with a smile, "I shall have the honor to fight foremost in the ranks of my prince." And this is ever the reward of heroism. During our civil war men were selected for difficult service who had the marks of devotion upon them. And thus it was with the apostle. He had greater honors after this, and endured greater sufferings than he had ever known at this time: it was his to testify for the Lord Jesus, suffer and die at Rome, ten years after this epistle was written.

And thus it is in Christ's kingdom to-day. When he has important service to be performed he selects the battle-scarred for the work. Yea, what an honor these marks are. John Clark, of Melden, in France, was for Christ's sake publicly whipped on three successive days, and afterward had a mark set in his forehead as a sign of infamy; and his mother, beholding it, encouraged her son, crying with a loud voice, "Blessed be Christ, and welcome be these prints and marks of Jesus." Even Pericles has said, "It is not gold, precious stones, statues,

that adorn a soldier; but a torn buckler, a cracked helmet, a blunt sword, and a scarred face." Yea, what an honor are these scars; and what an honor they will be after this life is done! It was to these marks of the Lord Jesus that the pious John Berridge referred when, in writing to a friend concerning the future existence and the probability of mutual recognition in the better world, he said, "Perhaps you will know me by my scars." Yea, what an honor they will be after the battle of life is over!

Well do I remember how, at the close of the war, when our boys in blue were discharged and permitted to return home, the news came to the town where I was then living that the regiment which had gone out from that place would arrive on Thursday morning at eleven o'clock. The morning and the hour came. All business was suspended, the town was decked in holiday attire, flags were flying, drums were beating, and all hearts were rejoicing. The streets were lined with the waiting hundreds. At last the whistle of the locomotive was heard, and soon the companies of home guards, in their bright uniforms, with their shining guns and bayonets and their finely equipped martial band came marching down from the depot as the escort at the head of the columns of veterans. But with all their fine uniforms and beautiful banners they evoked no enthusiasm or applause. No one thought of them at all. All eyes were strained to the rear to catch a glimpse of the returning heroes. At last they came along, clad in worn and faded uniforms, with banners torn and tattered,

with muskets old and dingy; some of them lame and halting; some of them scarred and disfigured; all of them bearing upon them the marks of stern usage. And as they came cheer after cheer rent the air, shout after shout rang through the crowd, and all was enthusiasm and excitement. And why this difference? Ah, these bore in their bodies the marks of the conflict. These bore the evidences of their heroic devotion to home and country.

One unacquainted with the facts might have inquired, "Who are these who are thus cheered and honored?" And from every lip in that great crowd would have come the reply, "These are they who have saved our nation, and have come to this hour through blood and smoke, through danger and death." John tells us that from the Isle of Patmos he saw the final home-coming of the hosts of God. He saw all the angels of God in their bright array standing about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts; but these excited no wonder, caused no comment. But after this he beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands, crying with a loud voice, and saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." And at once the question was raised, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" And the answer comes at once from the heavenly hosts, "These are they which came up through great tribulation, and have

washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." These are they who have the marks of the conflict upon them. These are the battle-scarred veterans. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."

What application has all this to our present circumstances? Much every way. You have beautified this house of worship. I congratulate you with all my heart upon it. Nothing could be more chaste or beautiful. But for what purpose have you done this? That it may be a place to delight the eye simply? That it may be a place of comfort for you and yours during the years to come? It may be all this; and, if so, it can be kept beautiful and bright. But if the work of the Lord is to be carried on here; if the din of conflict is to be heard; if souls are to be saved in this place, it will grow dingy again, the marks of conflict will soon be seen upon it. And the same thing is true of the people. You may have a pleasant time now; may enjoy this place selfishly, as you come, from Sabbath to Sabbath, with your families to sit in these pews and to hear the gospel preached from this pulpit. You may do all this, and save yourself any pain or toil. But if souls are to be saved here; if the Redeemer is to here see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, it will require hard, self-denying toil, and you too will bear in your bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus.

God grant that the latter may be the case: that hundreds may here be born into the kingdom of

God; that these walls may constantly resound with the shouts of newborn souls; that the Lord may count, "when he writeth up the people," that this man, and that man, was born here. God grant that this beautified house, and this sacred desk, may be consecrated and dedicated anew this day to the blessed mission of proclaiming the great doctrine of salvation by faith in a crucified Redeemer alone. God grant that this church in the simplicity and power of its worship may continue to be a standing protest against mere ceremonialism of any and every kind. God grant that here the truth which Paul preached, which he would not surrender at any cost, which stamped upon his body the marks of the Lord Jesus—God grant that this truth may continue to lift men out of their sin and degradation into the life and power of God, and at last lift them into the brightness and glory of heaven.

## II.

# Israel's Demand for a King.

"Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."—1 Sam. viii, 5.

## II.

### Israel's Demand for a King.

ANY marked crisis in the history of a great nation is ever a matter of interest to thinking men. Especially ought this to be true of that nation which God chose to be his own in a peculiar sense, upon which he bestowed special favor for hundreds of years, and the only one, of all the nations that have had an existence in the past, of which we have an inspired history. An account of such an event or crisis is given us in the chapter from which my text is taken; a crisis no less than that of a radical change in the form of the government of this chosen people. The elders of Israel came to Samuel at Ramah, we are told, and said unto him, "Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." This request, as we learn from the subsequent history, was finally acceded to, the Lord giving them a king in his anger. I have selected these words as the basis of my remarks on this occasion for two reasons.

I find in the event with which they stand connected, in this demand for a king, the beginning of that unfortunate career in the history of this people which resulted finally in their captivity and extermination. Those who are familiar with Old Testament history will remember how the King of Assyria came down and conquered Israel, and carried them captive into Assyria; and how from that

day to this they have been a lost people, no traces of them being found among any of the nations of the earth. True, there were other things which contributed to this sad end. The division of the kingdom under Rehoboam and the fearful idolatries which followed upon that event were doubtless the immediate causes of this calamity. Still this event of the text, this demand for a change in the form of their government, was the incipient cause of all their trouble. Hence it ought to be a subject full of interest to every Christian and Bible student.

Another reason for my selection of this subject is: It is full of practical lessons for us who claim to be the people of God of the present day. True, we may not to-day be choosing a king, nor demanding any change in the form of our government; but in the practical application of this subject to us the king here mentioned represents anything upon which the people of God of the present are tempted to rely for power and success rather than upon God himself. And this demand of the elders, polite and reasonable as it appears, represents the constant and increasing clamor for change and novelty which is to be heard upon every hand in the Church of God to-day. And when we come to examine the subject closely we shall find that the same motives which actuated Israel in their conduct and demand are at the bottom of this unrest among Christians, and are leading them to forget God. With this view of the matter before us my theme cannot be otherwise than an interesting one,

and one which should challenge and receive our prayerful attention. That we may fully understand our subject, and see its application to us, we need to know, in the first place, what the demand of the text implied.

I have already said it meant a radical change in their form of government. But the question arises, What would be the nature of that change? What was the character of the government from which they wished to be released? And what was the character of the government which they wished to assume? To answer these questions intelligently we must go back a little in their history. Four hnndred years previous to this time God had called this people out of Egypt, had delivered them from the bondage of Pharaoh by the hand of his servant Moses, and had constituted them into what is known as a theocracy; that is, had given them a form of government in which he would be their supreme and immediate Ruler, and in which he would have direct communication with them. But, as these communications could be better imparted to one individual than to the nation as a body, Moses was chosen of God to be their visible leader and the medium for divine communications. And for forty years he was their only visible head, while Jehovah was acknowledged as their only and immediate sovereign.

At the death of Moses, Joshua was divinely appointed as his successor, and for twenty-five years he remained their visible head and the medium for divine communication. At the death of Joshua no

one was chosen by Jehovah to occupy the position which he and Moses had filled, but for three hundred and thirty years God from time to time, as necessity required, raised up individuals to lead and deliver his people from oppression. These were known as judges, and during the period mentioned fifteen such leaders were raised up at different times and for different purposes. But during all this period God was still the recognized sovereign of his people, and these judges were regarded simply as the visible captains of his hosts. At the time when the events of our text occurred Samuel was occupying the position of judge; and perhaps never during the period of the judges had Israel enjoyed such uninterrupted peace and prosperity as had marked their career under his wise leadership. Dedicated to God in early infancy by his devoted mother, the godly Hannah, and called of God in a special and miraculous manner, at a very early age, to be the successor of Eli, his leadership had ever been marked by wisdom, godliness, and earnest efforts for the best interests of the people.

Such, then, was the character of the government from which they wished to be released. They wished to change, as the words of their demand imply, from the theocracy, in which Jehovah was their supreme Ruler, and in which he sustained such intimate relations with them, to a monarchy, in which some man chosen to be their king would be their supreme ruler, go out before them, and fight their battles for them.

Having then learned what their demand implied,

the question very naturally arises, What gave rise to this demand? Why was it made?

Certainly such a grave movement as this must have had a suitable cause. A people who for four hundred years had been under a form of government which had brought them national greatness and prosperity would not desire so radical a change in that government unless there were adequate reasons for making the demand. Upon examining the history of the event you will find that, ostensibly, they give two reasons as the basis of their demand: Samuel's age, and the conduct of his sons. They said: "Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." Now, at a first glance these reasons seem plausible, and sufficient to justify their action. Especially is this true when we read, as we do in the third verse of this chapter, that "his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." Certainly the outlook for their future as a nation was not promising; and apparently they were wise in thus anticipating, and protecting themselves against the threatened evil.

But was not all this simply a pretext to cover up some deeper and less worthy motive? Did they not, like too many of the present day, simply use the faults of others to conceal their own improper desires? I certainly think so. Had their desire for a change arisen from any real concern for their welfare as God's people the evils which seemed to threaten them could easily have been averted with-

out any such radical change as is here indicated. Had they brought the matter before God in earnest prayer he could easily have overthrown the authority of the sons and raised up some godly man to succeed Samuel at his death. Or, judging from what we know of the character of Samuel himself, we are safe in assuming that, had they presented the matter aright to him, he would willingly have removed his sons and appointed more worthy men to fill their places.

But, independent of these considerations, this demand, or rather the desire expressed by this demand, was not a new and sudden thing. One hundred and fifty years before this the elders of this same people had said to Gideon, after his conquests in their behalf, "Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian." But Gideon with his accustomed nobility of spirit had replied, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you." Thus we see that the spirit of unrest, the desire for a change, the thirsting after a monarchy which is expressed in the demand of the text had existed among them for a long time, and had been constantly growing stronger and stronger, until it finally culminates and breaks forth in this clamorous desire for a king. Hence, from all these considerations, I conclude that the reasons assigned for demanding a change were simply pretexts to cover up others which they were unwilling to make known. What, then, were these concealed reasons?

Or, in other words, what were the real causes which led to the demand of the text? So far as I can learn from a careful study of the subject, there were three principal motives actuating them in this whole matter. And the first, and the most glaring, was a want of confidence in God; or, in other words, a lack of faith in the unseen.

They wanted a visible, tangible king; one whom they could see with their natural eyes and whose presence they could feel. They wanted a king who would surround himself with all the pomp and glory of royalty, and who, in his own person and in the persons of his retinue, would visibly represent the power and prestige of the nation. In other words, they were no longer willing to live and walk by faith. Thus far in their history God had been the source of all their power; and in all their labors and dangers they had relied upon the unseen for help. But now they must have such visible and ocular manifestation of their own strength as an earthly king alone can provide them. That this view is correct will be seen when we notice the special things which they desired their king to do for them. He was to judge them, to represent them in the eyes of the other nations, and to fight their battles for them. They probably at this time were threatened with an invasion by the Amorites. If they had a personal, earthly king he could lead them to battle, and, inspired by his personal presence and influence, they could easily conquer their foes. Their whole trouble was they wished to walk by sight, and not by faith.

And is not this the great trouble with too many Christians to-day? Is it not true that "something to see and nothing to believe" is the wish and propensity of more than these ancient people? Is not this the great trouble with the Church of the present? Why are so many questionable things resorted to by Christians to-day as elements of success? Why is the temptation so great for Christians to rely upon external and inferior things, as sources of power, rather than upon the invisible and unseen? Is it not because, like the ancient Israelites, we have lost confidence in God? have lost faith in the unseen? Is it not because, like them, we are unwilling to walk by faith instead of by sight? We can see the influence and seeming power which comes from great churches, whether they are paid for or not. We can see the influence which arises from social prestige. We can see the apparent advantages which come to a church by slightly conforming to the world, by letting down somewhat the Bible standards of piety and Christian conduct. But we cannot see the mighty power and influence which comes alone from the unseen Spirit of almighty God.

Hence great churches are built, and in solemn mockery are dedicated to God while they belong to the masons and carpenters who erected them; hence popular preachers must be had, even though they must be transported across the continent; hence grand music must be supplied, even though the devil must furnish it; hence the house of the most high God must be turned into a playhouse,

and a market for all kinds of traffic, barter and speculation; hence those who have professed to be "in the world but not of the world" wink at the questionable amusements of the day, or even engage in them—and all this in order that Zion may be prospered. It is all the old cry of, "Make us a king to judge us like all the other nations." Men say, without these practices the Church of God cannot succeed; without these evidences of might and power the world cannot be reached. But what saith the word of the Lord? "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

Would to God that we might learn this mighty truth. How foolish were the people of our text in turning away from that only true source of power and strength, the living God, and looking for that power and strength in an arm of flesh, in a poor weak man whom their pride and unbelief had crowned as king. And how foolish to-day is the Church of God in turning away from that great source of power, the promise of the Father, the blessed Holy Spirit, and seeking the strength it needs in the vanities and follies which perish. The children of Israel, while they trusted in God, while they looked to the unseen for help and strength, never failed in any enterprise, never lacked deliverance in any time of distress. And is not this true of the Church of God? Where is the church that has gone forward in its work with a simple trust in God, relying for its strength upon the power of his might, that has not succeeded—

in the highest sense of the term? I am persuaded that it cannot be found.

The next cause of this demand was a desire to shake off personal responsibility.

In the past, under the theocracy, their success had ever been conditioned upon rigid obedience. In so far as they obeyed the voice of God they were invincible before all the other nations. But whenever they disobeyed him they failed in whatsoever they undertook. Such a condition of things has become irksome to them; a galling yoke which they can no longer endure. Hence they come desiring a change. They want to inaugurate a system of things in which they may have prosperity without reference to their conduct; and they vainly imagine that a monarchy, with an earthly king at its head, will bring to them this blessed result. And is not all this too true of many Christians, and many churches to-day? Are not all the expedients resorted to as elements of success simply devices by which to escape God's only appointed means of success: obedience to his word and law? Did not the Church of God once succeed in the highest sense without these questionable expedients and compromises? She certainly did. But that success was obtained upon the same terms that brought success to the Israelites under the theocracy: obedience.

But people to-day do not like these terms; hence every possible effort is made to substitute something that will draw, and guarantee at least fictitious success independent of this condition of

obedience. Brethren, I speak soberly when I say that it is my firm conviction that any church of the present day, let its circumstances and surroundings be what they may, that is composed of men and women who are earnestly seeking to know and to do the will of God will succeed in spite of earth and hell. True, it may not have the success which marked the history of the Laodicean church—it may not be rich and increased with goods; neither will it merit the rebuke, "Thou art neither cold nor hot: and because thou art lukewarm I will spew thee out of my mouth."

But the third motive which prompted them was a desire to be like the other nations.

This perhaps was the strongest motive which actuated them in their course. Twice do they offer it as a reason for their demand, as they say, "Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations," and again, "Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations." Palestine at this time was emphatically a land of kings; and they had set their eyes upon these nations around them. Contrary to God's express command, they had affiliated somewhat with them, and thus had enjoyed opportunities to observe the splendor, magnificence and dissipations of their courts. They had been dazzled and carried captive by these displays until a poor prophet, robed in a mantle, although conversant with the Almighty, looked mean in their eyes, while a king clothed in purple robes and surrounded by his guards and officers of state looked

grand; and such a one they must have. And no doubt their want of an earthly sovereign had made them a reproach in the eyes of the surrounding nations and gradually inspired them with a senes of their own inferiority. Doubtless their want of a royal head had often been cast in their teeth by their neighbors, as a stigma and disgrace, until they began to feel it such themselves.

We to-day, without a proper conception of the manners and customs of these Eastern nations, can scarcely realize how great was the stigma which rested upon them because of their peculiarity in this regard. We are told in history that when the English and Dutch were competing for power and influence in the East, the English, in order to damage their rivals, industriously circulated the dangerous secret that the Dutch had no king. The oriental mind was astonished at such a condition of affairs; and the Dutch, alarmed for the effect of this slur upon their respectability, stoutly repelled the charge, affirming that they had a very great king and exalting, for the time being, their Stadtholder to that higher rank. Something like this doubtless was the effect which the taunts and jeers of the surrounding nations had upon God's chosen people. That which before had been their chief honor and glory was now regarded as their shame, and every possible effort was put forth to rid themselves of their peculiarity. As a final means to this end they come to Samuel, saying, "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations." "Nay; but we will have a king over us like all the nations."

Brethren, is not this the secret of the clamoring for change and novelty which we find among Christians to-day? Is not this the secret of the compromising spirit found in so many churches in this nineteenth century? Do not all these arise from an unwillingness on the part of God's professed people to be looked upon as singular and peculiar? Are not all these the offspring of a secret longing, cherished in the hearts of too many so-called Christians, to be like the world? Ah! I fear that every candid man must answer "*yes*." Like the ancient Israelites, we shrink from being regarded as odd and singular. We feel it to be a stigma upon our respectability to be called a peculiar people. We forget the great fact that if we would accomplish any great work in this world we must be willing to be singular; yea, must be willing to stand alone in the contest for the right. We forget the great fact that if we would leaven and purify this world we must be different from the world. We forget the great truth that those whom God has raised up from time to time to accomplish his great purposes, the Enochs, Daniels, Elijahs and Pauls, have all been peculiar people. We forget the solemn lesson, which we ought long ago to have learned by experience, that conformity to the world on the part of God's people is the one great thing that robs them of their power and makes them a laughingstock and a reproach in the eyes of all true men.

The world to-day does not despise us because of our peculiarity, but because of our likeness to itself. And yet it seems to me that the great desire

and aim of too many Christians is to be like the world, to live in conformity to the world's practices, to enjoy the world's pleasures, and yet to retain enough of Christ and his gospel in the heart to insure them an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. It seems to me that all the efforts now being made to lower the standard of piety, that all the expedients now being resorted to to render the Church popular with those who have not the welfare of Zion at heart, are but repetitions of the cry, "Make us a king, that we may be like all the other nations." How constantly do we hear the plea, from those who would indulge in questionable enterprises and forbidden pleasures, "Why, others do so; those whom the world reckons as good do so." But, my dear brother, instead of that being an argument in favor of our indulgence it is the very reason why we should flee such things. We are to be unlike the world; and this tendency upon the part of so many Christians to conform to those around them, this desire to have this and that thing, and to engage in this and that practice, that they may be like all the other people with whom they associate, is what is injuring the Church to-day, and robbing it of its power.

"How far the Church can safely conform to the world" is a dangerous question; and should never be asked; but should be substituted by, "How may the Church best fashion the world to its own pure and lofty standard?" It is said of a certain Christian woman, whose husband was elected governor of one of our States, that after the family had been

at the seat of government for a few weeks her children came home from school crying, and saying that the boys and girls made sport of their clothing, calling it "hoosierish" and "old-fashioned," and advised them to get something more stylish. Whereupon the mother said, "Children, I did not come here to follow the fashions, but to set them." And so the children of God are in this world not to follow the world's standard, but to erect the gospel standards for others to follow.

But notice now for a few moments more particularly the mistake and sin which they committed in making this demand of the text.

For the sinfulness of this act of the Israelites in asking for a king is often misunderstood. It did not consist simply in their desire to change from a system of government in which a judge was their visible leader to one in which a king should occupy that position. It may have been a part of the divine plan that such a change should at some time occur. This indeed seems certain from the words contained in the seventeenth chapter of Deuteronomy, where God foretells their future kingdom, and gives directions as to the conduct of their king whom he shall set over them. And this view is strengthened when we remember the promise made to Abraham many centuries before, that kings should come from him. And also the prophecy uttered by Jacob hundreds of years previous to this event, that the scepter should not depart from Judah "until Shiloh come." After a careful study of the subject I am inclined to believe

that had not this demand been made at this time, and had the matter been left entirely in the Lord's hands, the monarchical government would eventually have been established and David would have been their first king, and thus all the misfortune and distress resulting to them from Saul's unfortunate reign would have been avoided.

But, be this as it may, they ought not to have made this demand at this time and in the manner in which they did make it. They ought to have consulted God in the matter first; they ought to have abided his time and way to bring about the change. But they did not demand the change because they thought it was in accordance with the divine purpose, and for the divine glory; they simply wanted a king for the reasons already given, without reference to the glory of God.

And this is true with regard to the desire for change and innovation, and worldly conformity, with their results, which besets the Church of God to-day. Did these things come as a consequence of and in conformity to God's will the case would be different. But who believes any such thing? Who believes that all the gorgeous display, all the catering to the world, the flesh and the devil which is found in many churches to-day, is in accordance with and the result of the will of God? Who, on the contrary, does not believe that all this is the result of pride, jealousy, and irreligion?

What then was the sin and mistake of this people in making the demand of the text? I answer in the first place, by this act they were seeking to

thrust aside the great thing that had bound them to Jehovah, and made them his people.

And that great thing was their peculiarity. God had made them peculiar, different from all other nations, that they might be his chosen ones; that they might be a fitting receptacle for the divine oracles; and that, finally, through them might be given to the world a divine Saviour. All the labor he had bestowed upon them for more than four hundred years, all the training he had given them by his servants, had been intended for this very purpose: that they might become a peculiar people; an oddity among the nations of the earth. Hence, had they asked for anything else under the heavens their case would have been different. Had they asked for greater wealth, or enlarged territory, or increased power, anything else, indeed, under the shining sun, their sin would have been light. But when they asked Samuel to destroy their peculiarity, to make them like the other nations, they struck down all; smote Jehovah in the face and snapped asunder the bonds which had united them to him as his chosen ones. Well might he say to his servant Samuel, "They have not rejected *thee;* but they have rejected *me*, that *I* should not reign over them."

How ungrateful was such conduct; how sinful was their act! What would you think of your child, upon whom you had spent years of toil and large sums of money, for whom you had denied yourself even the comforts of life in order that you might secure to him a liberal education, that in the

future he might be to you a pride and a comfort; if in the midst of it all, when the goal for which you had labored seemed nigh, he should come to you and demand that his books be burned, his school days end, and he be permitted to return to those who were without education and become like them? Would not such conduct upon the part of your child pain you beyond measure, and impress you as ungrateful in the extreme? And yet, was not this just what these people were doing in their relation to God?

And is not this just what we are doing when we seek to break away from those things which render us singular, and indulge in those things which make us like the world? God has called us to be a peculiar people; and all the labor and blessing which he has bestowed upon us were designed to render us such. Thus the apostle says Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And another inspired writer says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Now, when we strive to break away from this peculiarity which is our distinguishing feature; when we seek to break down this bond which unites us to God as his chosen people and unites him to us as our supreme Ruler, what greater insult could we possibly offer to Jehovah?

Again, the mistake of this people is seen in the

fact that their success had ever been the result of their peculiarity.

This is certainly true. Whatever of strength they may have possessed in the past as a nation had not come from their numbers, from their wealth, nor from any superior skill as warriors which was theirs; but had resulted simply from their peculiarity: because God was their supreme and immediate sovereign. The nations around them which had earthly kings had never been able to prevail against them when they were true to God, but in every contest they had come off more than conquerors. Hence their great mistake in wishing to rid themselves of this, the very secret of all their power and success. Is not the same thing true of the Church of God to-day? Are not all the elements of her success to be found in her peculiarities? in the things which distinguish her from all other people? Is not this true even of individual denominations?

Take the Methodist Church for instance, a Church that has succeeded beyond all parallel; and wherein lie the elements of her success? I answer, emphatically, In her peculiarities. It was her peculiarities, those things which distinguished her as a Church from all other then existing peoples, that made her a power in the world when first launched upon her great mission by that grand man, John Wesley. And in what did those peculiarities consist? What were her distinguishing features? I answer, the simplicity and spirituality of her worship; the simplicity, plainness and godliness which marked the

lives and habits of her followers; her earnest class meetings and live prayer meetings; and finally, and chiefest of all, the prominence which she gave by precept and practice to the scriptural doctrine of "holiness to the Lord;" of entire consecration to the Most High. These were the things which made her a power in the land. The Church of England at that time was cold and dead; buried in formalism and outward show. Hence, when this new and strange sect came along, filled and throbbing with life and warmth, with zeal and spirituality, the common people heard the Word gladly, and joyously received from them the bread of life. And this has ever been the case when she has maintained her integrity and retained her peculiarities. But on the other hand, just in proportion as she has been possessed of a desire to become like the other nations, to conform to the spirit and methods of less spiritual and more worldly Churches, just in that proportion she has lost her power. Is this not true? Ah, how sadly does her history in many places of late years attest the truth!

But men say, "Times are changed; things are not as they once were; and Methodism as it was fifty years ago is not adapted to the increased culture and refinement of the present day—and especially in New England." That was exactly the cry of the ancient Israelites. "The time was," they said, "when a theocracy was good enough." But the times had changed, and now they must have a king. Brethren, there are some things in this world that time doesn't change. There are

laws of nature which remain the same through the lapse of ages. If you want to raise potatoes to-day you have to proceed much after the plan of fifty years ago. They must be planted in the ground just as they were then, and must have the same kind of air and water that they had then, and any other method of raising potatoes will be likely to fail. I believe there was a way invented a few years ago of hastening their growth by the aid of blue glass. But it was soon found that potatoes raised under blue grass, if their growth was speedy and luxuriant, were apt to prove sickly affairs. I sometimes fear the blue glass theory has been introduced into the Church; and, while it may produce a rich and luxuriant display, mark you, that as in vegetation so here, the life, the strength of the fruit has been sacrificed for the sake of the outward show. No, no, my friends; we can't improve upon the old-fashioned way of saving souls and building up the kingdom of God.

If souls are to be saved to-day they must be saved just as they were a hundred years ago: through the same old gospel, through the influence of the same blessed Holy Spirit, aided by the same earnest, godly labors on the part of God's people which were put forth then. There is much fallacy in the argument which we constantly hear about the changed condition of things. If the Church to-day cannot save souls in the way just indicated she cannot save them at all. She may have a crowd, upon some other plan, and many outward manifestations of success; but all that amounts to noth-

ing if souls are not saved and the kingdom of Christ established in the hearts of men. I know that all this may sound trite, and old-fogyish, and that I lay myself open to the charge of glorifying old ways and methods. But, brethren, I gladly plead guilty to the charge. Old ways are good, and not to be despised. God himself has set his seal to them, as he says, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein ; and ye shall find rest for your souls." And there are hundreds who will never find rest until they do ask for the old paths.

I was greatly impressed some time since by reading, in one of our Church papers, a letter to a young minister, written by that eminent scholar and godly man, Dr. Merrick, of Delaware, Ohio. Among other good things, he says—on this very point of old ways—"Be sober ; don't get intoxicated. This I think is your greatest danger. It is a good thing to think, and to be an independent thinker. But there have been thinkers before us, and wisdom will not die with us. A great deal of truth has been thought out, and a great deal of error ; and almost as many have been carried away with error as have received the truth. But the special danger is in being captivated by that which is new, at least new to us. And here comes in with great force and propriety the apostolic injunction, 'Be sober,' steady, steady. Amid the sparkle and dash and rush of waters there must be rocks. Inquire for the old paths, the marked-out channels. There may be a new one, but don't strike out rashly.

Wrecks are all around; be sober. The old channel which has so long proved safe may be trusted still. Truth does not spoil by age. Its are the eternal years. I love old truth; the truth of patriarchs, apostles and martyrs; truth that has inspired and purified noble souls in all the past, and is still lifting them up into the society of angels and of God. And the longer I live the more I love it. 'Getting old-fogyish,' perhaps you will think. Well, possibly so; but I suspect that it is the experience of not a few. Not that we love the new less, but that we love the old more. There is something grand in the truth that has stood the test of ages, unmoved and unsoiled, only polished and made to shine the brighter by assault. Hold fast, my young brother, to the old truths, the truths that have become gray-headed with age and use."

Manly words from a grand old man are these; and they apply to more things connected with the religious life than simply the utterance of religious truth. Let us beware lest we be carried captive by the spirit of unrest and longing for novelty, which so thoroughly pervades our age.

Notice now the result of their demand.

I can only notice a few things which followed as a result of their unwise action. And first we learn that God gave them a king.

Not approvingly; for Hosea tells us that "He gave them a king in his anger." He simply allowed them to have their own way that they might learn their folly by experience. Just as parents today often allow their children to do things, or to

have things, upon which their hearts are set, but which the parent in his superior wisdom knows will injure them, in order that they may learn by sad experience to trust him and be guided by his judgment, so God allowed this people to have their choice that he might teach them a lesson. But even this he did not do until they had been fully warned of the evil consequences which should follow upon their act. He said unto Samuel, "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee. . . . Howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them."

And this Samuel faithfully did. He told them that all this pomp and splendor after which they thirsted would mean taxation and royal aggrandizement. That their king would take their sons and daughters to his own use, and their vineyards, and their cattle, and their servants, until they should cry out unto the Lord in their oppression; but the Lord would not hear them in that day. But to all this they turned a deaf ear, as they said, "Nay; but we will have a king over us." And God gave them their desire. And so he does to-day.

If the Church shall reject him, and rely on other things for help; if his people shall insist upon being like the world around them; he will at last grant their desire, and give them the things for which they long, and with them leanness of soul, but not until, through his faithful ones, he has protested against them. And this is our duty to-day, my brethren. We may not be able to entirely change the current

of things, to arrest the tide of worldliness which is sweeping everything before it; nevertheless it is our duty to lift up our voices against it. Samuel could not prevent them from having a king, but he could cry out in warning, and this he did. And this is our mission to-day. We are Protestants, in other words, "PRO-*TEST*-ANTS." Let us not be such in name only.

But another result was, their king oppressed them.

Most faithfully was the prophecy of Samuel verified in their history. Even during their most peaceful and prosperous period, under the reign of the wisest of their kings, King Solomon, they were so sorely oppressed, by taxation and otherwise, that at his death they came to his son and prospective successor and begged that they might be released from the burdens which his father had put upon them. It had not been so under the theocracy. They did not then have to complain of their burdens. All this burden and expense was put upon them that the king whom they had chosen might be properly supported in his royalty. Men complain to-day of the expense connected with the work of the Church, of the heavy burdens which they have to bear. And why is this? Because of the necessary things connected with the work of Christ? No; but because of the kings which they in their pride have chosen.

Again: their kings led them astray.

You are all familiar with the disastrous consequences which resulted from the monarchy. How, after the death of Solomon, the kingdom was

divided; how their kings gradually led them into idolatry, until the cup of their iniquity was full and God delivered them into the hands of their enemies, and they ceased to have an existence among the nations of the earth. Such will ever be the influence upon and such may be the disastrous consequences to God's people, resulting from possessing those things for which they long in order that they may be like the world.

One thought more: Samuel by his wise and faithful conduct mitigated the serious evil.

No one can help admiring the noble conduct of Samuel under these trying circumstances. When the elders came to him with this demand, which seemed like a reflection upon his entire life and labors as their judge, he wisely laid his grievance before the Lord in prayer, and after he had received divine direction he faithfully carried out his instructions. And it is to his unswerving fidelity, and his labors in their behalf, that we must attribute their escape from many of the evils which might otherwise have attended their conduct. Let us imitate his example, and resolve that, let others do as they may, we will prove faithful to our heavenly King. Let us, by unanswering fidelity to the truth, rebuke the spirit of unrest which may be around us; and may God help us to be willing to stand singular and alone, if need be, and to be reckoned by all the world a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

## III.

# For What Does the Methodist Episcopal Church Stand?

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I WISH to give expression to the personal pleasure and profit I have derived from this series of Sabbath afternoon addresses, and my gratitude to the genial rector of this church; in whose fertile brain they originated, and through whose tireless energy they have been brought to what promises to be a successful completion. I know more now about my brethren in the ministry, and the Churches they represent, than when this course began; and if they do not know more concerning me, and the Church I represent, after this afternoon, I am determined the fault shall not be mine.

I am to give the closing address of the series. Two advantages manifestly arise from this fact: First, I can say anything I wish about my brethren and their addresses, and they will have no opportunity to reply. Second, it will naturally be understood that my Church stands for not only all the good things already mentioned, but also for all not thus far alluded to. Brother Brown in his admirable address at the beginning of the series said, "We doubtless each believe that in the better world all will be of the denomination which we here individually represent." The fraternal delegate

* This address was given by Dr. Brodbeck in St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church, Charlestown, Mass. It was one of a series given in that church by leading representatives of the great religious denominations.

from the United Brethren Church to our General Conference at Omaha, three years ago, closed his very effective address with these suggestive words: "It makes but little difference what we are here. We may be Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Lutherans, Congregationalists or Episcopalians; but when we get to heaven we shall all be United Brethren in Christ." I thank God we are this now, at least so far as the ministers of Charlestown are concerned.

In speaking upon what my Church stands for I shall not consume time upon those things for which our churches stand in common—such as reform, and the separation of Church and State—but shall endeavor to confine myself to those things for which we stand distinctively. Yet in doing this I must trench somewhat upon the domain of other Churches; for doubtless they all stand, in a measure, for what my Church stands for more distinctively, just as the Methodist Church stands in a measure for what they stand for more specifically.

Now, to know what a Church stands for distinctively one must know something of the conditions and circumstances which gave rise to it. How came that particular Church to have a being? What brought it into existence? The proper answer to these questions will assist very materially in understanding that for which the Church stands to-day. Thus we know that the Universalist Church in its beginning was largely a revolt against Calvinism. This doctrine taught that all for whom Christ died must inevitably be saved. The founder of Universal-

ism took his Bible and soon proved, to his own satisfaction, at least, that Christ died for all men; and therefore, if Calvinism be true, all men must inevitably be saved. Congregationalism in its beginning was largely a revolt against that which is hierarchical in Church government and ritualistic in worship.

Methodism in its beginning was a protest against Calvinism and a modification of the hierarchical and ritualistic. But it was still more than this. In its beginning it was largely a doctrinal reform. Not only had religious life in the Established Church degenerated into a matter of mere forms and ceremonies, but the great fundamental doctrines of our holy Christianity had become buried under the rubbish of men's traditions and speculations. Hence Mr. Wesley's labors were not simply a protest against spiritual deadness and decay, but a reaffirmation and revitalization of the cardinal doctrines of the Protestant faith. Just as Luther's Reformation was a battle for the reestablishment of the great doctrine of justification by faith, so Mr. Wesley's Reformation was a battle for the reenthronement, in the minds and consciences of men, of the great doctrines of repentance toward God; faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; the witness of the Spirit to our adoption; and entire consecration and a condition of holiness as a possible attainment in this life.

If I were to be asked, "What were the chief watchwords of the Wesleyan Reformation?" I would say, "These three foundation doctrines of our Protestant Christianity—justification by faith, the witness of the Spirit, and holiness unto the

Lord." Mr. Wesley said of these, "These are our main doctrines, and they include all others;" and these are the chief doctrines of Methodism to-day. Brother Sprague, in his excellent address, said that in the events which transpired in the reign of Henry VIII there was not the establishment of a new Church; it was simply the Church which had existed before, after it had washed its face. Now, if I were sure I would not be misunderstood, I should say that in the events connected with the Wesleyan Reformation there was not the establishment of a new Church, but rather that it was the same Church, which had existed before, after it had taken another wash. For let it be remembered that Mr. Wesley never contemplated organizing a new sect; that he never for a moment thought of leaving the Anglican Church; and his followers never would have done so had not the mother Church, as Bishop Lawrence himself has said, unwisely driven them out.

Our brethren of the Protestant Episcopal Church have acknowledged many times that we are, if not a daughter, at least a stepdaughter of their communion; and we have frequently been invited to return to the maternal embrace. But the difficulty is, the stepdaughter has grown to such enormous proportions (there are about four millions of us) that to return now might seriously embarrass the old homestead, and therefore, out of regard for the comforts of the old folks at home, we have thus far politely, but persistently, declined to accept the invitation.

Now, all this being true, I would say the Methodist Episcopal Church stands for three distinct things:

First, *that which is positive in doctrine.* Methodism has never been tolerant toward that which is vague or loose in doctrine. She requires of her ministry that they unequivocally believe her doctrines and as unequivocally teach them. And these doctrines to which she has given special prominence are of the most positive character. One of these is that of the unlimited nature of the atonement of Christ. As already intimated, when Mr. Wesley began his work in England Calvinism prevailed. Indeed, historians tell us that the Anglican Church was thoroughly honeycombed with Calvinism. And Mr. Wesley himself has been severely criticised by polemic writers because he signed the creed of that Church, as a priest of her communion, when all the time he was at heart an Arminian. Now, Methodism, from that hour to this, has taught the great truth which she believes is announced in the apostle's words when he says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" the great truth announced by the apostle when he says Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death "for every man;" the great truth which enables every human being born into the world to say, with the apostle, "The Son of God loved me, and gave himself for me."

But, while Methodism has thus taught that Christ died for all, she has not taught that all will therefore necessarily be saved. She has ever insisted upon sincere repentance on the part of the sinner; a repentance involving sorrow for sin, confession of sin, and a turning away from sin; a repentance growing out of a profound conviction for sin because of its exceeding sinfulness in the sight of God; a conviction for sin, not simply as an accident, or a defect in man's moral nature, but as a manifestation of the deep-seated depravity of the human heart. She has taught that this repentance must lead the penitent soul to a personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only source of salvation; that this faith will be followed by a radical change of his nature through the power of the Spirit; and that this change will be made known to the penitent by the testimony of God's Spirit with his that he has become his child.

Methodism has always repudiated the idea that mere reformation is sufficient for salvation; that a sinner may become a saint by simply washing himself, changing his clothes, cleansing his teeth, and entering the visible Church. She has ever insisted upon the necessity of a radical change in man's nature: a change so radical that he is indeed now a new creature in Christ Jesus; that old things have passed away, and all things have indeed become new. She has, furthermore, insisted that when this great work is done he will consciously know it; that God's Spirit will witness with his that he is adopted into the divine family; or, as Charles Wes-

ley has put it in song, the Spirit will "answer to the blood," and tell him he is "born of God." And as she has taught this glorious result as a possibility she has, with equal emphasis, taught that man has the power of an opposite choice: that he may spurn all the gracious influences of the Spirit; go on in a course of rebellion against God until disharmony with God becomes his permanent character, and, dying thus, this disharmony goes on forever. She has ever taught that there is no remedial agency reaching beyond this life; that every man while here makes his own place and at death goes to it and remains in it forever; that the hour is coming when that which is just shall forever remain just, and that which is filthy shall forever remain filthy.

Methodism stands, in the second place, for that which is thorough in organization. Next to doctrine, one of the most vital elements in denominational life is its polity, or its mode of church government. That of Methodism is neither strictly democratic nor monarchical. It rather combines both of these features, and finds its type in the limited monarchy of England more nearly than in the simple democracy of our republic or the absolute monarchies of some other nations.

The governing power in the local church is in the Quarterly Conference; a body which, as its name implies, meets four times a year. This body is made up largely of officers nominated by the pastor and elected by its own members. Now, right at this point, I am free to admit, is the ele-

ment of weakness in the otherwise almost invulnerable chain of our system. If the members of this body were elected by the church as a whole, as they will be at some time in the future, we should have almost a perfect system from bottom to top. This body conducts the business of the local church and creates the ministry of the Church as a whole. Every Methodist minister must be licensed by the Quarterly Conference; and if he unites with an Annual Conference he must be recommended for admission to said body by the Quarterly Conference. But it has no such power as many persons imagine belongs to it. It has no legal authority to determine who shall be the pastor of the church, any more than an equal number of the most obscure members of the church who might get together for a similar purpose. All such prerogatives are self-assumed, having no legal basis whatever.

Next to the Quarterly comes the Annual Conference, which, as its name implies, meets once a year. It is composed entirely of ministers and has no legislative power whatever. It passes upon the character of its members individually, elects to orders such as are candidates, hears reports as to the previous year's work, and receives the appointments from the hands of the presiding bishop.

Next to this body comes the General Conference, which meets once in four years and is the law-making body of the Church. It has supreme jurisdiction over all the interests of the Church. Hence it is a delegated body, made up of ministerial rep-

resentatives of the various Annual Conferences and lay representatives, elected by the Lay Conferences which are held in conjunction with the Annual Conferences just previous to the session of the General Conference.

Perhaps the most peculiar feature of our polity is what is known as our "itinerancy." When a man enters the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church he voluntarily surrenders the right to determine where he will labor, or how long he will labor in a given place. All Methodist churches make a similar concession, giving up their right to determine who shall be their pastor, or how long he shall labor with them. The General Conference fixes the extreme limit. At first, under Mr. Wesley's immediate supervision, the limit was six months; then it was extended to one year; afterward to two years; then to three, and finally to five years. Present indications seem to point to a speedy removal of the limit entirely. Then each pastor's time will expire at the close of each year, but he will be eligible for reappointment annually so long as the interests of the work render such a course wise. As the law now is, he cannot remain longer than five years in any given charge. The appointing power belongs to the General Conference, but as a matter of convenience it has been delegated by that body to the bishops.

In all this we follow strictly the analogy of our secular governments. In these all business is done by delegated bodies: the city council, the State Legislature, the national Congress, all of these law-

making bodies are delegated bodies. But the General Conference cannot legislate alone on matters vital to its life and composition. These matters are protected by "Six Restrictive Rules." To change any one of these requires a three-fourths vote of the ministers in the Annual Conferences and a concurring two-thirds vote of the General Conference. In this we follow the analogy of our national government. When an amendment to the Constitution of the United States is proposed it must be sent down to the Legislatures of the several States, and must receive a certain affirmative vote from them, and then a certain affirmative vote within the halls of Congress itself, before it can become a part of said organic law. This body elects the bishops, secretaries, and editors of the Church.

Now it can be readily seen that two great advantages inhere in this system. In the first place, no Methodist church is without a pastor. If you will pardon a personal allusion I might refer, by way of illustration, to Trinity Church of this district. A year ago last April my worthy predecessor, after a most successful pastorate of five years, preached his closing sermon and went to the Annual Conference. The next Sabbath the pulpit had to be supplied, because of his absence at Conference, but he was still the pastor of the church. On the following Sabbath I stepped into the pulpit as pastor of the church, and clothed with all the authority and prerogatives which he possessed at the close of five years of labor.

In the second place, no Methodist preacher is without an appointment. Every effective minister of our Church must have an appointment, and no bishop has the right to close his work at an Annual Conference until he has assigned every effective member of that body to a field of labor. Now the harmonious working of this system is simply marvelous. I am told that out of 13,649 ministers, who received their appointments at the hands of our bishops last year, only two refused to go where they were sent, and only one church refused to receive the pastor assigned it.

The unit of our organization is the class, over which a leader presides, appointed by the pastor. Two or more of these classes, united, make a church, over which a pastor presides. A number of these united form a district, over which a presiding elder has the oversight. A number of such districts united form an Annual Conference, over which a bishop presides. Thus we have a perfect system of supervision. The class leader oversees his class, the pastor his church, the presiding elder his district, and a bishop the entire Conference. The pastor is not a member of the local church, but of the Church at large through his membership in the Annual Conference.

Methodism stands, in the third place, for that which is aggressive in life. Methodism has always prided herself upon her pioneer spirit. She has never waited until a town was established, a congregation gathered, an edifice erected, and a pastor called before she began her work. But she has

sent her ministers where there was no town, no congregation, no church edifice, with the commission to create them all. Her "circuit system" has enabled her to do this. After her ministers had established twenty or thirty preaching places, in schoolhouses or private homes in a given section, these twenty or thirty appointments were constituted a circuit, and one or two pastors were placed in charge of it. These pastors would then go the rounds of their circuit, preaching nearly every day of the week and two or three times on Sunday.

I have heard Bishop Foster say that his first circuit had thirty appointments; hence, when the month had only thirty days he preached every day, but when it had thirty-one days he had one day of rest. As population grew in those sections the time came when each one of the twenty or thirty appointments of the circuit was transformed into a self-supporting church. In this way Methodism has been able to grow so rapidly and to impregnate so thoroughly the great West with her teachings and spirit.

The same results might be accomplished in New England if the circuit system could be successfully introduced and operated here. Scores of small towns and villages in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts, which are now almost destitute of gospel privileges, could, through this system, soon be supplied with preaching, and all other Christian ordinances, so that within twenty years these sections would be thoroughly revolutionized. But from some cause, doubtless as the result of the

leaven of Congregationalism, our Methodist people in New England do not take kindly to the circuit plan. If a church here has but sixteen members, and can pay but forty dollars a year toward ministerial support, they must have a minister's whole time or nothing.

This same aggressive spirit has pervaded Methodism in the local territory and church; hence she has always been a revival Church. She has always believed in special campaigns for souls. Just as in the political world special campaigns are entered upon, involving continuous meetings and efforts, in order to insure the success of certain men and measures, so Methodism enters upon aggressive campaigns for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom. She believes that men are dead; that they must be aroused; that they must be compelled to come to the Marriage Feast. In this work she makes great use of the personal testimonies of her people. So soon as a young man or woman is converted he or she is assigned to a class, and at once encouraged to testify. Thus our class meetings have been training schools for our ministry. A young man there has manifested talent for public speaking, and the possession of special gifts and graces, the pastor's attention is called to the fact, he is licensed to exhort, then to preach, and, after suitable preparation is obtained, is launched into the regular ministry.

Brother Brown in his address said his Church stands for the personal testimony of the individual believer. But where did they get that idea from?

Fifty or sixty years ago such a thing as personal Christian testimony on the part of the laity was almost unknown in the Congregational Church and its services; and as for a woman speaking in meeting, such an event would have sent the good deacons home with a horrid nightmare and the profound conviction that the end, the destruction of all things, was at hand! Brother Brown was a Methodist too long not to know that all this is the result of the leaven which Methodism introduced into New England.

So far as ordinances are concerned Methodism believes in two—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. She believes that, in baptism, water applied on the subject in the name of the Holy Trinity is the vital thing, and not the quantity applied; hence she gives the candidate his choice between sprinkling, pouring and immersion. She baptizes children because she believes they are included in God's covenant of grace with man. As children under the old dispensation received the rite of circumcision as the seal of that covenant, so, under the new dispensation they receive baptism as the seal of the newer and better covenant contained in the redemption of Christ. She baptizes children also because the accounts of baptisms contained in the New Testament would imply that such was the practice of the apostles. We read in a number of instances of the baptism of entire households. We believe there must have been some children in these various households. At least, if they were anything like the average household represented

here to-day, they must occasionally have included a baby or two.

We observe the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a memorial of his death and a pledge of his coming again; hence we invite all "who truly repent of their sins, are in love and charity with their neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from thenceforth in his holy ways," to unite with us in its celebration. As to ritual, we are perhaps a compromise between Congregational and liturgical churches. Our communion, baptismal and marriage ritual were all taken from that of the Protestant Episcopal Church—modified somewhat, it is true, and yet the greater part of the strength and beauty of that grand and stately service remains.

Such, then, is the Methodist Episcopal Church. If I have succeeded in giving you any better knowledge of it than you had before, I am glad and thankful. I certainly rejoice because of the better knowledge I have obtained of the denominations represented by these my brethren of the ministry. And now, it seems to me, if each and all of these denominations shall mean all to this community which it has here been asserted they stand for it will not be long until Charlestown is captured for the Lord Jesus Christ; it will not be long until a monument, higher than that which stands on yonder hill, might well be erected to commemorate the surrender of the forces of evil, which now so greatly perplex us, to the great Captain of our salvation.

God grant that such may be the case; and may

it be found that these afternoon services, which have been so filled with the spirit of Christian oneness and brotherly love, have contributed in no small measure toward bringing about so glorious an achievement.

# IV.

# Preparation for a Revival.

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THE time has been in the history of Methodism when discussion upon the above-named topic was much less needed than now. In the earlier history of our Church in this country—when the territory was new and sparsely settled, and religious services were enjoyed only occasionally by neighborhoods—a three or four days' meeting could be held, and, without any apparent preparation, the people could be reached in large numbers and brought into the kingdom of God. But now things are very different, especially in our larger towns and cities. The gospel is preached at least twice on every Sabbath from many pulpits; religious services of various kinds are held during the week; the minds of the people are preoccupied with other matters, until, as I fear, they have become thoroughly accustomed to, and hardened against, all ordinary religious warnings and appeals. Hence, if to-day a church and community are to be blessed with gracious revival influences, it would seem to be necessary that some special preparation be made for such a result. The question therefore arises: "What should that preparation be?" or, in other words, "How may the way for a revival be prepared?" In seeking to answer these questions I would say a twofold preparation is necessary.

I. Preparation on the part of the pastor.

I believe this is the first and most important

factor in securing and promoting a revival in any church—the pastor himself must first be prepared for it. There must be on his part,

1. An earnest desire for a revival. A desire growing out of not mere personal ambition, or a simple anxiety for personal reputation, or a purpose to assure his continuance with his church, but a desire growing out of a supreme concern for the glory of God and the welfare of immortal souls. Now there may be a few instances in which a revival has come to a church when this state of mind did not exist in the pastor; but they are very few, and the results in all such cases have been temporary and unsatisfactory. A church usually takes its tone and spirit from its pastor. If he is indifferent with regard to a revival the church will be so; but if he makes the revival supreme in his thought and labor the church will soon catch his spirit. And this he must do by his words, his prayers, his pastoral visiting, the grasp of his hand, his very appearance. All must be vital with and breathe an intense concern for the salvation of the lost. He must be consumed with a passion for souls if he would see his people inspired with a like passion. But this intense desire he cannot have at will. He cannot say, "I will now be deeply concerned for the unsaved, and intensely desirous for a revival in my church," and thus produce such a state of mind. The human mind does not work in that way. Hence there must be on his part,

2. Earnest prayer and searching of the word of God. Revivals of religion are born in travail of

soul. "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." That travail must usually be in the soul of the pastor. I know there are apparent exceptions to this statement, but these only prove the rule. The pastor who would see a great revival in his church must first gain the victory himself, and that not in the public congregation, but on his knees, alone before God. There the battle must be fought and the victory won. There, by earnest, continuous, importunate prayer, by intense, devout study of the word, by tearful meditation upon the condition of the lost souls about him and the marvelous love and compassion of Christ, his heart must be brought into tender sympathy with the loving heart of the Redeemer in his yearnings over lost men, until he is ready to cry out: "O God, give me souls, or I die!" This will lead on his part to,

3. Earnest preaching in the direction of a revival. I mean by this, not simply during the special services held for its promotion, but before they begin; as a preparation for them. My own habit has been to commence early in the fall of each year to preach on Sabbath mornings upon themes bearing directly upon the individual and collective responsibility resting upon Christians and churches to win men to Christ. I perhaps cannot better enforce this thought than by naming the subjects used for several weeks before a late revival campaign. They were as follows: "David's prayer for restoration" (Psalm li, 12, 13); "The all-important question" (Acts ix, 6); "A name to live and yet

dead" (Rev. iii, 1); "Beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv, 46–48); "The Church's invitation to the world" (Num. x, 29); "Preparing the way of the Lord" (Mark i, 3); "Concern for lost souls" (Rom. x, 1); "Entire consecration" (Rom. xii, 1). But it does not matter so much what the subject may be as that the preaching be evangelistic. And by evangelistic I mean preaching which earnestly enforces upon Christians their supreme obligation to seek the lost, and upon the unsaved their imperative duty to repent and turn to God. Oftentimes the best preaching for this purpose is what is commonly known as doctrinal. Mr. Finney, we are told, frequently began his work in a community by preaching upon the great doctrines of "God's sovereignty and man's free agency," "The atonement of Christ," "The personal responsibility and accountability of the soul to God," "The final judgment," and "The unchangeable character of future destiny." The great and important thing is to hold the thought and attention of the people to the one issue—that of bringing lost souls to Christ. Let this be the aim and effort of the pastor for weeks before the special services are begun, and the revival will surely come. But there must also be,

II. Preparation on the part of the church.

And in this direction several things are absolutely vital.

1. The way must be thoroughly cleared for the revival. The importance of this statement cannot be overestimated. A want of appreciation of this

simple truth has blocked the progress of more possible revivals than any other one cause. The revival must have the supreme right of way—the track must be thoroughly cleared before it, or there can be but limited success, if any. All other things, such as socials, concerts, lectures, entertainments of all kinds—things which may be perfectly legitimate in themselves and proper at other times—must now be set aside, and the thought and interest of the church be concentrated in the one supreme object, that of promoting the revival. The pastor himself must here be careful that no previous engagements on his part shall interfere. Nothing but sickness or death should take him away a single evening from the one great work. My custom is, before entering upon special services, to ask my people publicly not to invite myself or family to their homes during their continuance. I accept no invitations, go nowhere, but concentrate all my time and powers upon the work in hand. Under these conditions the church soon feels that the pastor is in earnest about the matter of a revival, and rapidly catches his spirit. There must also be on the part of the church,

2. Earnest prayer for and consecration to the revival. Not only must the pastor pray; the people must be gotten to agonize before God also. Just how to secure this needed result is often a problem to the pastor. For several years I have succeeded well by the following plan.

Before beginning special services I have had cards printed reading as follows:

COVENANT CARD.

I hereby covenant with my pastor to pray at least three times a day for a revival in our church, and to be present at the services held for its promotion as constantly and regularly as possible.

Signed.....

Last winter at the regular prayer meeting preceding our special services I preached a short sermon upon "Asa's covenant" (2 Chron. xv, 12). I then spoke of the cards, and asked all Christians who so desired to come forward at the close of the services and get one to take home with them. I told them I did not want anyone to sign the card then, but to take it home, read it carefully, pray over it, and then if they felt they could sign it to do so and return the card to me. I also assured them that their failure to enter into the covenant would in no way depreciate them in the mind or esteem of their pastor, as it was to be a purely voluntary matter. Within a few days ninety-eight of the cards were returned to me signed. I then suggested that in so far as possible we pray at family worship in the morning, at noon, and just before coming to the services in the evening, so that there might be concerted prayer. Now anyone can see what a power there was in this plan. Here were ninety-eight people sacredly covenanted together with their pastor to pray three times a day for the revival, and to give themselves wholly to the work of its promotion. You will not be surprised to learn that God came in mighty power into our church and community; that for nine consecutive

weeks the work went forward gloriously, and that one hundred and sixty-five souls bowed at our altar and professed to be either saved or reclaimed from a backslidden state.

But I have far exceeded my limits, and yet have said nothing about the importance of pastoral visitation as an element in preparing for a revival, nor of many other minor things which might be mentioned. These, however, may be easily inferred. The thoughts indicated above are, in my judgment, the most important ones bearing upon my subject. I believe it is possible for every church in our beloved Methodism to have a blessed revival. May God graciously grant such a result, for his own name's sake and glory.

## V.

# Methodism and the Unsaved Multitudes.

## V.

## Methodism and the Unsaved Multitudes.*

NEVER was the question, "How shall we reach the unsaved multitudes in our cities?" a more burning one than now, and never was Methodism's relation to this question a more vital one than in the present. Every thoughtful person will admit that, if this problem is to be solved, Methodism must be an important factor in its solution. From the beginning of her history her special mission has been to the unevangelized. Her success in the present and future depends largely upon fidelity to that mission. The question then becomes all-important: "How may she most certainly meet her obligation in this direction?" Several things are necessary:

She must really want to do it.

A vast meaning is wrapped up in this short sentence. The cause of failure in accomplishing this work on the part of scores of our churches may be found in a want of actual desire to do it. There are two distinct ideas prevalent in the world to-day as to the mission of the church. One is that it is simply a fortification for defense; that its great aim should be to hold the ground already won by the fathers; and many churches are content if they can simply have sufficient accessions by letter to compensate each year for their losses by deaths and removals. The other idea of the church's mission

* This appeared in *Zion's Herald*. It was written at the request of the editor of that paper.

is that of an aggressive agency, thrust out into this lost world, to run it down and capture it for the Lord Jesus Christ. As one has said: "These two ideas are well illustrated by the careers of McClellan and Grant. McClellan fed and drilled his army; hence we were constantly receiving telegrams from his snug headquarters saying, 'All quiet on the Potomac.' Grant fought his, and, therefore, the messages from his headquarters in the saddle read, 'We are in the midst of a great battle. We have the enemy on the run. We shall fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.' It was Grant, and not McClellan, who put down the rebellion." But the trouble is that many of our people are opposed to aggressive work. They say, "We have built our churches and support them. We open them, and provide preaching, and invite the people to come. If they will not come our responsibility is ended." Nowhere in the word of God can any authority be found for such a conclusion. Nowhere does it say, "Go and build churches. Open them and invite the people to come. If they refuse your duty is done." It does say, on the other hand, "Go and preach the gospel to every creature. Go and compel men to come in, that my feast may be supplied with guests." But men sometimes say, "This will bring people into the church whom we don't want." And here is the great trouble. Three fourths of our difficulty in solving this problem is found at this point. We draw artificial distinctions in society which Christ never made. He ate with publicans and sinners.

He came to call, not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. If he were on earth to-day he would doubtless be found among the poor and degraded oftener than in our elegant churches.

Another thing necessary on the part of Methodism in the accomplishment of this work is:

She must believe she can do it.

This short sentence means much. Our churches fail in this work because they do not actually believe in its possibility, and this unbelief paralyzes their efforts. When Admiral Dupont was explaining to Farragut why he failed to enter Charleston harbor with his fleet of ironclads, the latter listened patiently while he gave this reason, and that reason, and the other reason, and then said, "Ah, Dupont, there was one more reason: You didn't believe you could do it." Men say, "Many of these unsaved ones are foreigners and Romanists." But these can be reached. We send men to Italy and Mexico to reach them, and demand that they do it. The father of the writer was a Romanist in early life, but through the labors of a Methodist church was converted, and became a minister in her communion; and through his ministry scores of Romanists were brought to Christ. We have a mighty gospel, an almighty Saviour, and a present, all-powerful Holy Spirit. We ought to be ashamed of our unbelief.

Another thing necessary in the accomplishment of this mission is:

Earnest personal work on the part of her individual members.

We must cease to talk so much about reaching the masses, and concentrate our thought more upon the individual. We must be willing to do a retail as well as a wholesale business in this work of saving the multitudes. But earnest, personal, individual work is the very thing to which Christians are often disinclined. All of our discussions about "How to reach the masses" grow out of a desire to substitute some other and easier way than the one just named. This, however, cannot be successfully done. The Church of Christ began through this method. Andrew brought Simon, Philip brought Nathanael, and they brought others. Thus the Church was established. The trouble at the present day is that we want to do everything through organization. The time has come when we can hardly relieve a single human want, or seek the welfare of a single human soul, without first organizing a society with a constitution and by-laws, and a long list of officers and committees. But the work of saving men cannot be done in this way. When Christ fed the multitude he did not first organize a society with by-laws and officers, but simply prayed, and then broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, and they gave it to the multitude, man by man. And so to-day his people must receive from him the bread of life, and then distribute it individually to the perishing men and women around them.

Another thing Methodism must do in the fulfillment of this mission is,

She must make her churches accessible to the common people.

This cannot be done by simply holding a formal service on Sabbath morning. There must be the Sabbath evening preaching service. No greater mistake can be made than the giving up of the second preaching service. When Sam Jones came to Boston to begin his campaign he was asked, "Shall we have meetings on Saturday evenings?" His characteristic reply was, "The devil never lets up on Saturday night. That is one of his biggest nights." And is not this equally true of Sunday nights in large cities? The evening service should be of a flexible character, the seats should all be made free, and the trend of the meeting evangelistic. But some are ready to say, "All this means disorder." There is always disorder where there is life. The most orderly places in the universe are our cemeteries, so long as death reigns supreme. But on the morning of the resurrection, when life shall take the place of death, there will doubtless be some disorder even there. Our best men and women must help in this service. One difficulty in the past has been that this work has been too largely relegated to the few, and these often not the most influential of our membership. Instead of remaining at home, or going to hear some popular preacher, or becoming indignant if some stranger gets into their pew, let our most influential members be present at this service; let them be in the vestibule to welcome the people as they come; let

them be willing to stand throughout the service if need be; let them watch for manifestations of concern on the part of the unsaved, and then seek to get them to yield to Christ. And what a change would take place! What could not then be done in reaching the unsaved multitudes! These unevangelized ones must be made welcome to our churches. Mere conventionalism should have no place in the house of God. The Frenchman who said, when asked why he did not attempt to save the man who was drowned before his eyes, "Why, I never had the honor of an introduction to the gentleman," ought not to find representatives in Christian people in their relation to the dying, unsaved ones around them.

But the supreme thing necessary on the part of Methodism, if she is to fulfill her mission in this direction, is:

The continuous presence and baptism of the Holy Spirit with and upon her people.

This is our greatest need in accomplishing this work, not only to qualify the workers, but also to render the church attractive. Here is the divinely appointed source of power, here the great magnet which is to draw the multitudes. Our misfortune in the past has been that we have too often tried to substitute something else for this as an attractive force. Too often our churches have resorted to all manner of expedients, and almost worldly entertainments, in order that they might attract and hold the people. But the attempt has always proven a dismal failure. I am transported in

thought back to Jerusalem and the time of the apostles. Peter and John have performed a miracle of healing, and are arrested and cast into prison. After being warned not to speak any more in this Name they are released, and immediately go to their own company. And what is it they say and do? Do they say, "We are unpopular; we must do something to get hold of the people. Let us have an entertainment of some kind, and thus draw the people to us?" Did they say that? No; they simply got together and prayed, and as they prayed the Holy Ghost came upon them, the place in which they were assembled was shaken, and they went forth as giants to proclaim anew their crucified and risen Lord. And what is said of them in that condition? "They had favor with all the people."

A church filled with the Holy Ghost is popular to-day. Would that we might remember this simple fact. It would save us a world of trouble and multiply our power a hundredfold in saving the lost and perishing all about us. May God send upon our common Methodism a gracious baptism of the Holy Ghost!

## VI.

# Origin and Work of the Epworth League.

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### Origin and Work of the Epworth League.

TO-DAY, throughout our Methodism, will be celebrated the sixth anniversary of the birth of what I believe to be one of the most providential movements in the history of our Church: our young people's society known as the "Epworth League." This anniversary I wish to improve by calling attention to three important thoughts: The origin of the Epworth League; the possibilities of this organization; the perils which may possibly threaten it. Notice, then, in the first place:

The origin of the Epworth League.

This, as I have already indicated, I believe to have been purely providential. No one can carefully study the history of Methodism without being impressed with its providential character throughout. Mr. Wesley was just as certainly providentially raised up to meet an emergency and crisis in the life of the Christian Church as was St. Paul, or Martin Luther; and the movement which he inaugurated was just as truly providential as was the great apostle's mission to the Gentiles, or Luther's reformation of Germany; and from the day of the inauguration of the movement called Methodism until the present there have been distinctively providential epochs in her history. One of these came in the origin and establishment of class meetings. Another came in the introduction of the lay element into her counsels. Still another came in the

inauguration of woman's work in our mission fields, both home and foreign. And, lastly, another came in this provision for the needs of her young people.

But this last providential movement did not begin as late as many people suppose. In the thought of many, I imagine, the organization of the Epworth League was the beginning of this effort on the part of the Church to provide for the life of its young people, and that it was instigated by a spirit of rivalry provoked by the organization and success of the Christian Endeavor Society. But no greater mistake could possibly be made. So long ago as the General Conference of 1872 an effort was made to provide for this need. Some time previous to the session of that General Conference there had been organized in one of our Philadelphia churches by its pastor, the Rev. T. B. Neely, a young people's society known as The Church Lyceum, the chief object of which was to encourage the reading of good books. So important was this movement considered that Dr. Neely wrote a book, entitled *The Church Lyceum*, explaining its purposes and methods. The Lyceum idea soon spread to other churches, and in March, 1872, a meeting was held for the purpose of uniting these Lyceums in a City Union.

At this meeting a memorial was also prepared to be presented at the General Conference, to meet in May, requesting that body to formally and officially recognize the Lyceum as a part of our Church polity. The memorial was presented by Dr. Warren, President of the Boston University, and was

referred to a committee. After due consideration the committee made a favorable report, but owing to a great pressure of business at the close of the session it was not acted upon. But at the General Conference of 1876 the memorial was again presented, the Church Lyceum was officially recognized, and the following paragraph placed in the Discipline: "The fourth Quarterly Conference" of every charge "shall appoint a committee . . . to organize wherever practicable a Church Lyceum, . . . for mental improvement, and to develop facilities for social intercourse; to organize free evening schools; to provide a library, text-books, and books of reference; to popularize religious literature by reading rooms or otherwise," etc.

The Lyceum idea was received with much favor in many parts of the Church, and did a good work in stimulating the intellectual life of the young and in promoting a taste for good literature. This organization, however, was destined soon to give place to the Oxford League; a society which retained the idea of intellectual culture but provided also for special activity in the realm of social and spiritual life. This society was the outgrowth of the fertile brain of Dr. J. H. Vincent, now Bishop Vincent, who had done so much for the Church through the Chautauqua movement. He felt that the Lyceum idea did not meet the entire needs of our young people, and therefore proposed to organize a society that should provide for symmetrical spiritual and intellectual culture, and to call it the Oxford League, after the famous University in

which the "Holy Club" was formed. The new organization was received with great favor by many pastors and leading laymen, and was given hearty and sympathetic indorsement at the centennial anniversary of the Christmas Conference, held at Baltimore in December, 1884.

But in the meantime other young people's societies were being formed in different parts of the Church. In the West, at a camp meeting held at Des Plaines, Ill., in August, 1883, the Young People's Methodist Alliance was organized. In 1887, in the State of Michigan, the Methodist Young People's Union came into being. In 1888, in Ohio, the North Ohio Conference Methodist Episcopal Alliance was formed. During all this period New England had not been indifferent on this subject of the needs of her young people. Early in 1887 Dr. J. H. Twombly, that indefatigable worker, whose heart always remained young and who was always planning for the welfare of the young, presented a resolution to the Boston Preachers' Meeting concerning the interests of the young people of Methodism, and calling for a convention of the young Methodists of New England. In response to this resolution a mass meeting was held in the Bromfield Street Church on March 3 of that year. At this meeting a committee was appointed to consider the needs of the young people, to call another convention, and to report plans for organization and work.

This second convention was held in the Temple Street Church on October 26, 1887. About three

hundred and fifty young people were present, representing more than one hundred New England churches. Before the convention adjourned, the Young People's Christian League had been organized and its first officers elected. During the afternoon session, Bishop Vincent, who was providentially in the city, came into the meeting and was invited to speak. He did so, and among other good suggestions offered to the new organization was one concerning an appropriate motto. He said that many Christian people prayed a good deal but never sought to help anyone else toward a Christian life. Others were always busy trying to help some one else but failed to spend much time in prayer. He believed that both of these exercises were necessary, hence he would suggest as a motto for the new society these words: "Look up—Lift up." The suggestion was enthusiastically received. These words were adopted as our motto, and to-day they are the motto of the Epworth League. The new organization spread rapidly. Chapters were formed all over New England and in other parts of the country.

Such was the condition of our Methodism in its relation to her young people at the beginning of the year 1889. There were five distinct young people's societies in a denomination which in other regards was thoroughly connectional. Many of our most thoughtful ministers and laymen felt the condition to be anomalous and hurtful; hence, after a great deal of correspondence and consultation, a meeting was called for the purpose of discussing

the question of unification. This meeting was held at the Central Church, Cleveland, Ohio, now the Epworth Memorial Church, and began its work on the fourteenth of May, 1889. At this meeting representatives were present from the five existing societies. After many hours spent in consultation and prayer, on the afternoon of May 15, all of these representatives came to a common basis of union, and the Epworth League, as it now exists, was formed.

It was agreed to adopt for the colors of the new organization those which had been in use by the Young People's Methodist Alliance—the white ribbon, with a scarlet thread running through the center from end to end. For a badge the Maltese Cross, which had been the badge of both the Oxford League and the Young People's Christian League, was adopted. For a motto that of the Young People's Christian League was unanimously adopted: "Look up—Lift up." It was also agreed that this sentence from John Wesley, used by the Oxford League as a motto, should be a sentiment of the League: "I desire a league offensive and defensive with every soldier of Jesus Christ." The forceful words of Bishop Simpson, "We live to make our Church a power in the land, while we live to love every other Church that exalts our Christ," was also chosen as a sentiment of the League.

With regard to the name of the new organization more difficulty was experienced. Several were proposed: "The Wesley League," "The Oxford League," and "The Christian League"—each of

these had earnest and determined advocates. At last one of the delegates, while speaking, had occasion to refer to the Oxford League and the *Epworth Hymnal;* but by one of those strange *lapsi linguæ* which will sometimes occur, and which in this case was undoubtedly providential, he said "Oxford Hymnal" and "Epworth League;" and at once the latter name was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted as the cognomen of the new society. Dr. Berry, Editor of the *Epworth Herald*, in giving an account of this memorable meeting, closes with these words: "The hour of midnight approached as these final details were arranged. It was a memorable hour. It would have been difficult to find upon all the earth a happier company of men. Congratulations over the result of the negotiations were joyfully exchanged. Faces were illumined by gladness. 'Praise God!' was an exclamation which fell in all sincerity from many lips. Our brethren had a right to be glad; for they had, under God, laid the foundations of an institution which was destined to be one of the mightiest forces in all the history of the Christian Church."

Thus the origin of the Epworth League was purely providential. It was not a question whether or not we should have *a* young people's society in our Church. The question was whether we should have one such society, or five; whether we should unify our work in this department, as it is in every other department, or whether we should have here conflicting interests and diversified methods. I believe that if the hand of God was ever plainly

visible in the history of our Methodism it was in the formation of the society whose sixth anniversary we celebrate to-day.

But now the question arises, and becomes of the utmost importance, "What is to be the issue of this new movement in our Methodism? Will it prove a benefit or an injury to our Zion?" In attempting to answer these questions I am led to the second thought under my theme, which I wish to discuss:

The possibilities of the Epworth League.

It would be difficult to define and enumerate all the possibilities of such an organization. I can plainly see, however, five directions in which it may prove an untold blessing to the cause of Christ and Methodism. The first of these is:

1. In inspiring our young people with a greater love for and devotion to their Church.

This possibility, of course, grows out of the fact that it is a denominational society; and because of this I believe a denominational society is best for our young people and for our churches. I have never been inclined to rail at denominationalism. I believe it is a part of the providential ordering for the progress of Christ's kingdom. I believe that all branches of Christian work are being more vigorously prosecuted because of these apparent divisions than they otherwise could be.

In illustration of the correctness of this conviction I might quote a statement I once heard made by the late Dr. Gordon. A church of his denomination in one of our New England towns was

rapidly dying out. He was appealed to to visit the church and tell its members what to do to save themselves from utter extinction. He went, and met them in an evening service. When the opportunity was given to him to speak he said: "You are in a languishing condition as a church, and desire me to tell you the cause and to suggest a remedy. I can do both. The trouble is, you are the only evangelical church in this community. You have always had everything your own way. You have had nothing to arouse you to diligence; consequently you are dying. Now, the remedy I have to propose is this: Start out to-morrow and see if you cannot find a half dozen Methodists in the town, and, if so, prevail upon them to organize a Methodist church here, and I will guarantee that within a year you will be a live, vigorous Baptist church." The suggestion was acted upon, and the result was exactly as he had predicted.

I have nothing to say against denominational loyalty. I love to see men or women with a strong love and devotion for the Church of their choice. What I dislike to see is a false liberalism, which professes to take in all denominations and has no special devotion for any. In preference to that I will take the spirit of the little Methodist girl who found herself the happy possessor of six little kittens, but was told that she could keep but one, and must give the other five away. After an afternoon spent in sorrowfully disposing of her treasures she returned home, and, when asked how she had succeeded in her mission, replied, "Well, I have placed

four of them in good Methodist families, and Aunt Hattie wants the other one. She is not a Methodist; she is a Congregationalist; but she is a real good woman; and if I don't succeed in finding another Methodist family I shall let her have the fifth one."

Believing, as I do, in denominationalism, I also believe that anything that will inspire within our young people a love for and loyalty to their Church is a great blessing. The Epworth League can do this for Methodism. It can do it by instructing our young people in the doctrines, history and polity of our Church, and by bringing them together for better acquaintance and the cultivation of a denominational *esprit de corps*. Nothing will serve so greatly to break down the tendency to drift away from our Church, sometimes manifested by our people, as a knowledge of her providential history, her unique polity, the grandeur and unassailable character of her doctrines, and the magnificent work she is doing in all lands. But the League may be a great blessing:

2. In contributing to the intellectual improvement of our young people.

Methodism, born in a university, as she was, has ever sought to care for the intellectual needs of her adherents. Not only has she reared colleges and universities for this purpose, and inaugurated the Chautauqua system, but she has also sought to stimulate to literary attainments those who could not well avail themselves of these other advantages. Hence, as already seen, she has long had her Edu-

cational Committee, through which to provide for this need, and now the Epworth League takes its place for the same purpose. And what can it not do in this direction through its Literary Department! All that was possible through the Educational Committee, and more, may be achieved along these lines by the League.

How much this work is needed in many of our churches! Scores of young people are to be found in them who can never avail themselves of educational advantages otherwise, and who will never be stimulated to self-help in this direction without the agency of just such an organization as this. But with the help of the League these may be inspired to study, a taste for learning may be created within them, and thus they may become, not only intelligent Methodists, but intelligent citizens as well. But the League may prove a great blessing:

3. In furnishing our young people with healthful and rational entertainment.

And what is more needed in our churches than an agency that can do this! Who does not know that in many sections of our Church this entertainment feature had reached a ridiculous climax? What with "Donkey Parties," "Kissing Bees," "Mock Auctions," and "Mock Marriages," the cause of Christ was well-nigh disgraced and the blush of shame brought to hundreds of honest cheeks. Scores of pastors have felt this keenly and thousands of devout souls have grieved over it deeply. But the difficulty has been to know how to meet the problem. Young people have social

needs. Rational amusement is one of the necessities of our complex nature. The multitudinous temptations to improper amusements on every hand had to be met and counteracted. What could be done? How many are the pastors who have wrestled and groaned over this problem in the past! I believe the Epworth League is the solution of the problem. Let the young people of our churches become absorbed in the work of the League, as outlined in its various departments, and the cry for amusement on their part will be greatly lessened, and what little remains can be properly met through the Social Department. But the League may be a great blessing, further:

4. In aiding the financial work of the church.

Should I ask the churches of Methodism as a body, "What is it that most hinders your work?" many would at once reply, "Constant anxiety about our financial needs." Now, should this be so? Ought not Methodism, with its numbers and wealth, be freed from all such anxiety? I am sure she ought, and equally sure that she may be. There is not a church in Methodism to-day that could not be properly and easily suppotred if proportionate, systematic and continuous giving were practiced by all its members. The putting aside sacredly for God's cause of one tenth of his or her income, on the part of every member of our churches would forever relieve them of all financial anxiety. How many of our people to-day give absolutely nothing? How many others give far below their ability? How many others still give only spasmodically?

Here is a direction in which the Epworth League may be of untold value to our churches. Let there be in all of our local chapters a persistent effort made to cultivate a spirit of liberality within its members; let them be informed as to the financial needs of the church; let the matter of proportionate, systematic giving be kept constantly before them, and a revolution will take place in the financial condition of our churches within the next ten years. I would say, let the giving of one tenth be inculcated in the minds and hearts of our young people and I believe wonders will be accomplished. Nothing would more astonish scores of Christians, who now think they are giving liberally to the cause of Christ, than to adopt this "tithing" plan for one year, and thus see by contrast how little they had given before.

Finally, the League may be a great blessing to Methodism:

5. In stimulating the spiritual life and work of the Church.

Here is where it is most greatly needed, and where it may prove of the highest value. Who does not know that the greatest, the deepest, the most pressing need of our churches to-day is a higher type of spiritual life on the part of its members, and a consequent greater spiritual power on the part of the Church as a whole? Why is it that with all our magnificent appliances as a Church, with our members and wealth, we are not doing more in bringing this lost world to Christ? Is it not because we have been trying to substitute

something else—numbers, organization, social position, wealth—for the power of the Holy Ghost? Is it not because we have been depending upon mere human contrivances for success rather than upon the almighty arm of Jehovah? What do we need so much in all our churches as a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit? And how greatly the Epworth League, with its young life, its fresh zeal, its trustfulness of youth, may aid in bringing this about! The discouragements and limitations of the past have grown out of the fact that the spiritual work of the Church was relegated to a few, and they the older members, while the young and middle-aged were too much absorbed with its mere social interests. But what a new life and courage will come to those in our churches who are laboring to hold the Church steady to its true mission—that of saving souls and building up men in holiness—if they can see a great army of young people, full of the fire and zeal of youth, and baptized with the energy of the Holy Spirit, coming up to their help! This is the great, the important work for the League to accomplish. If it fails here it fails utterly. If it breaks down at this point it breaks down completely. And this leads me to notice the third, and last thought under my theme:

The perils which may threaten the League.

That there may be perils attending such an organization and its future no thoughtful person will deny. First among these I would name:

1. That which arises from the enthusiasm begotten of mere numbers.

The growth of the League has been phenomenal. Never before in the history of the Church has any movement appealed so quickly and successfully to the favor of our people, nor reached such magnificent proportions in so short a time. Only six years have elapsed since its organization, yet to-day it numbers 14,719 chapters and nearly 1,000,000 members. When was anything like it witnessed in any movement pertaining to Church life and work? Who does not rejoice in its marvelous growth, and the rapidity with which it has spread itself over our whole Church? Yet right here is an element of danger. The most stable things in nature do not grow rapidly. The most permanent movements in the moral and religious world have developed slowly. That which comes up in a night in these realms is apt to wither in a day.

True, there is an explanation of this marvelous growth to be found in the young people's societies already existing when the Epworth League came into being, and which were merged into it. Equally true is it that there need not necessarily be premature decay because of this rapid growth. The reason that there is danger in this direction lies in the fact that in the human disposition there is a tendency to rest in the mere enthusiasm of numbers, and to depend upon these swelling hosts to give life and success to the movement. Israel was often tempted to number its swarming multitudes, and to vaunt itself because of its mighty hosts. But success comes not from multiplied thousands. It comes from earnest effort, consecrated

zeal, and a mighty faith in God. Another danger possible is:

2. That which arises from dependence upon mere organization.

Where could be found a more magnificent system of organization than that which marks this new movement in the Church? With its Board of Control and General Cabinet, its General Secretary and Official Editor, its General Conference District, Annual Conference, and Presiding Elders' District organizations; its local chapters with their various departments for the accomplishment of every form of needed work; its direct and vital connection with the Church through the Quarterly Conference—how could anything be more complete so far as organization is concerned? Yet right at this point there is danger. More than one human institution has gone down because of the completeness of its organization. Over more than one wrecked movement has the coroner's jury returned the verdict, "Died of too much machinery."

Mere organization in itself, no matter how perfect and complete, is impotent in accomplishing results. A French surgeon was boasting of the number of times he had performed a certain delicate operation. A bystander asked, "But how many of the patients lived?" "None," was the reply; "but the operations were very brilliant." So it may be said of many splendidly equipped movements, "They accomplish nothing, but then the organization is magnificent." How prone the human mind is to depend upon organization!

But success does not come through the perfection of the system. It comes through the zeal and wisdom with which the system is worked. With living brain and heart as the inspiration of the system organization becomes a mighty aid in accomplishing results. Another peril possible to this organization is:

3. That which may grow out of a tendency to become a Church within a Church.

The very perfection of its organization—the fact that it is composed largely of one class of our membership; the fact that it has its own paper, its own literature, badge, business meeting, and devotional service—all this renders it possible for it to become a distinct element in the Church; one lacking assimilation with the whole. No greater calamity could possibly come to our Zion than a division based upon age. Personally, as a pastor, I have never encouraged such a division in any way. I have never formed classes on such a basis. Our young people need the counsel and experience of the aged. Our aged people need the inspiration which comes from the freshness and enthusiasm of youth. A church which has a large young people's meeting at 6:30 o'clock on Sabbath evening, and an old folks' meeting at 7:30 o'clock from which the young are conspicuously absent, is in a critical condition. A League whose members attend the first-named meeting and then go home, or to some other church, leaving their pastor to do the great work of the Sabbath evening service without their help, is not a blessing to its church.

Yet some pastors say, "Such is the condition at my church." This is not the fault of the system, but one of the dangers, arising out of so complete an organization within another, which must be carefully guarded against. Another peril possible is:

4. That which arises from attempts to make it a financial adjunct to other organizations and enterprises.

Here I believe is a danger threatening this movement. The extent to which our local chapters are being appealed to for assistance for this and that enterprise is amazing. It would seem that almost every movement in the Church involving financial aid is seeking to hitch the League to its cart. Now I have already shown that the League may become a mighty power in the financial work of the Church, but in that I referred to the needs of the local Church and the great benevolent enterprises of our Methodism. Even in these directions I do not mean that the League should act independently of the Church as a whole, but through the regular Church channels, just as the other members do. I do not believe that the League ought to raise money, simply as a League, even for the local church. As already shown, it is not to be something distinct and separate from the whole body, but an integral part of it; cooperating with it and working through it. Another peril possible is:

5. That which arises from overlooking its spiritual purpose and mission.

I have already noticed this thought in my discussion of the possibilities of the League, but I

want to emphasize the thought in another form, under its perils. Paragraph 339 of our Discipline, under the head of "Young People's Societies," says: "For the purpose of promoting intelligent and vital piety among the young people of our churches and congregations, and of training them in works of mercy and help, there shall be an organization," etc. This, then, is the great purpose and mission of the League: "To promote intelligent and vital piety among our young people." This purpose, therefore, should never be overlooked for a moment. Valuable as the League is along the other lines I have named, its greatest value lies in spiritual directions. We did not need it simply for educational purposes; we had the Lyceum and Chautauqua Circle to do that work. We did not need it simply for social purposes; we had other young people's organizations to do that work. We did not need it simply for financial reasons. But we did need it for spiritual purposes: that "intelligent and vital piety might be promoted among our young people."

If any of these other ideas be exalted in the work of the League, at the expense of the spiritual, it will be calamitous, and the decline of the organization will not be far off. If, on the other hand, the spiritual work of the League shall be kept to the front; if the great aim and desire of our Leaguers shall be to raise the standard of spiritual experience and life in our churches; if, from the Board of Control down to the local chapters, all the various divisions and departments be absorbed in the grand

purpose to make our Church the mighty spiritual agency which God designs she shall be, then will the League be an untold blessing to our Zion; then will its permanency and usefulness be assured.

Such is the origin, and such are the possibilities and dangers, of this great movement whose anniversary we to-day celebrate. Can anyone doubt that it is a providential movement; one which, under the blessing of God, is destined to do great things for his Church and cause? Although there are perils possible to it, yet I believe its possibilities far outweigh and overtop its dangers. With one of our honored bishops as its president; with a Board of Control made up of some of the wisest and most devoted ministers and laymen of our Church; with a general secretary who has been a successful pastor, and therefore understands the needs of the Church life and work of the present; with an organ unsurpassed by any young people's paper in the country; with an editor whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches;—with all these I believe a glorious future is before this great movement. With its interests in such hands I believe its possibilities will be actualized, its dangers avoided, and this youngest and most vigorous of all the organizations of our Church will be the agency in the hands of God to lead us to greater victories and grander achievements in the future than we have ever known in the past; until our beloved Methodism has wrought out her part in bringing this lost world to the Master's feet and in ushering in the millennium glory.

## VII.

# The Fidelity of Our Young People to Their Doctrinal Inheritance.

## VII.

### The Fidelity of Our Young People to Their Doctrinal Inheritance.

THE proper presentation of this theme involves the prosecution of three simple inquiries—namely, "Have our young people a doctrinal inheritance?" If so, "Are they loyal and faithful to it?" And, if not, "What is the remedy for this lack in these directions?" It is to a consideration of these three thoughts that your candid attention is invited.

I. Have our young people a doctrinal inheritance?

An inheritance in law is that which a man has by descent as heir to another, and may transmit to others as his heirs. A doctrinal inheritance I understand to be a system of truths, or body of divinity, received from the past, and to be safely transmitted to the future. If this be a correct definition of the terms, and the question be asked, "Have our young people a doctrinal inheritance?" I answer at once and emphatically, *they have*, and a grand one at that. The proof of this assertion is to be found in several directions. And, first, in,

The very origin of Methodism.

While it is doubtless true that many things conspired to bring about the great spiritual awakening and reformation which culminated in the development and organization of Methodism, yet it will ever remain true that in a high sense it was a doc-

trinal reform. Not only had the religion of the established Church of England degenerated into a system of forms and ceremonies, without spiritual life and power, but it was also true that the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity were buried beneath the rubbish of men's traditions and speculations. Hence, Mr. Wesley's labors were not simply a protest against spiritual deadness and decay, but a reaffirmation and revitalization of the great cardinal truths of the Protestant faith. Just as Luther's Reformation was a battle for the reëstablishment of the great doctrine of "justification by faith," so the labors of the Wesleys were primarily for the reënthronement in the minds and consciences of men of the great doctrines of repentance toward God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the witness of the Spirit to man's adoption, and a state of holiness and consecration to God as a possible attainment in this life. Of these Mr. Wesley himself says, "Repentance we account as the porch of religion, faith as the door, and holiness as religion itself." And, concerning the witness of the Spirit, he says, "None who believe the Scriptures to be the word of God can doubt the importance of such a truth as this; and it concerns the Methodists, so called, to clearly understand, explain and defend this doctrine, because it is one part of the testimony which God has given them to bear to all mankind." If I were to be asked today what were the grand watchwords of the Wesleyan Reformation I would say, "These three great foundation doctrines of God's word, 'Justification

by faith, the witness of the Spirit, and holiness unto the Lord.'" These Mr. Wesley calls "Our main doctrines, which include all the rest;" and these constituted the battle cry of that marvelous movement which rendered possible our surroundings and privileges as Methodists to-day. And these constitute that grand body of divinity which is our special inheritance as Methodists in the present, and which we are solemnly pledged to maintain uncorrupted, and to transmit untainted to the generations to come.

But, again, that our young people have a grand doctrinal inheritance is seen in the history and literature of Methodism ever since.

And as to the former, the history of Methodism, I think every candid mind will agree with me when I say it has been one of championship and defense of these grand doctrines from the first until the present. True, the days of severe controversy, so far as Methodism is concerned, are about past. Whether those of opposing faiths have adopted more largely her tenets, or she has conformed to their lower views; and whether to the advantage or injury of evangelical faith, I leave you to judge. I sometimes think it almost a misfortune that we do not have at least enough controversy to compel us to more frequently emphasize our distinctive beliefs. But, whatever may now be our experience as a denomination in this regard, we know that for many decades the defense of the faith once delivered to the saints was the chief employment of our ministry and the

chief delight of our laity. More than one good honest Methodist felt then that the interpretation put by the good hard-shell Baptist upon Paul's eloquent words, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness," namely, that, without debating it, it was a great mystery, but if it were properly and sufficiently discussed and debated it would become quite plain, was the correct one. And even many good Methodist women were then the hardy successors of the good old colored woman of the Baptist persuasion who came up to the surface of the water, after her immersion, choking and sputtering, but triumphantly crying, "Now I's ready for disputin'!"

How many and terrific have been the battles fought upon the theological arena by the giants of the past; and how many and resplendent have been the victories won by the champions of Wesleyan Arminian theology. And then study the literature of the Church during all these years, if you would know the relation which doctrine has sustained to the work and progress of Methodism. Wesley's *Sermons*, Fletcher's *Appeal*, Fletcher's *Checks*, Watson's *Institutes*, and the Church Catechism—what a grand system of doctrine these constitute! But not only has she thus preached her doctrines, and printed them to be read, but for a century she has been singing them in magnificent style. What a grand body of divinity has been the Methodist Hymn Book throughout all these years! What great essential truth of the Holy Scriptures is not emphasized and crystallized in the

immortal hymns of the Wesleys and Isaac Watts! Take simply one of Charles Wesley's as an illustration of this fact, the one hundred and twenty-first in our collection, and see how the doctrine of the Trinity, the omnipresence of God, his omniscience, and especially his abounding love, are all set forth:

"Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
One God in Persons Three;
Of thee we make our joyful boast,
And homage pay to thee.

"Present alike in every place,
Thy Godhead we adore:
Beyond the bounds of time and space
Thou dwellest evermore.

"In wisdom infinite thou art,
Thine eye doth all things see;
And every thought of every heart
Is fully known to thee.

"Thou lov'st whate'er thy hands have made;
Thy goodness we rehearse,
In shining characters displayed
Throughout the universe."

Then take the religious periodicals of the Church, her *Advocates*, magazines, and reviews, and how grandly they have stated, elaborated, and defended these doctrines. Certainly it seems to me that, if ever the young people of any Church had a grand doctrinal inheritance, the young people of Methodism have such a one to-day. And now the question arises, and becomes interesting in the highest degree:

II. Are they loyal and faithful to their inheritance?

The answer to this question depends somewhat upon locality. There are sections of our land where possibly it might be answered in the affirmative. There are other sections where, I fear, it could not. But how is it in our section: in our highly favored New England? Now while I rejoice in the loyalty of thousands of the young people of our churches—and would not pass judgment upon any—yet I may safely say they are not all so faithful to their inheritance as they might be. I fear there is some laxity upon the part of many young people of this region in their fidelity to Methodism, in the highest sense of that term. I fear many are drifting away from the landmarks which their fathers have set. And the question comes to me, Why should this be so? Why, especially, should it be so in New England, the scene of the labors of an Asbury, a Lee, a Hedding, and a score of the ablest champions Methodism has ever known, and a section which in the past has produced the best type of Methodists the world has ever seen? I imagine several causes may be assigned for this deterioration.

And one is the general disregard of doctrine which marks our day. This is not entirely peculiar to New England. It is a growing evil in all directions; and yet it is perhaps more marked and has a more rapid development in our section than elsewhere. Nowhere are the conditions more favorable to the growth of such indifferentism than in the agnostic atmosphere of Boston and vicinity. We hear it constantly asserted that religion is a

life, and not a system; a thing of æsthetic culture, and not of belief and emotion. Just what is meant by such language the persons using it doubtless could not tell, but such is the weak sentimentalism which prevails largely in our community. The religion of such persons is simply a religion of goodishness. As for the great doctrinal truths with which the Bible abounds, they will have none of them. They do not know, neither do they care, whether their Saviour is a poor weak man like themselves or is infinite in love and power—mighty to save, and strong to deliver. They talk loudly of liberty of conscience, compliment self-denial, have a good word to speak for self-sacrifice, and think very highly of love to one's neighbor. They emphasize the practice of humanitarian pinciples, but are careful to tell you that they do not trouble themselves about doctrines or creeds. And yet somehow, when you look at these people you do not find that they are so much more self-denying than others; that they love their neighbors any better than other people; and as for self-sacrifice, truth compels us to say that somehow you do not find any of their names on the rolls of the world's martyrs. They ridicule creeds and doctrines; their great cry is for "Liberality; liberality!" and the individual who has a well-defined religious belief they decry as narrow-minded, bigoted and puritanical. Such are the sentiments many are constantly proclaiming. And these sentiments are beginning to affect the pulpit, in many sections, so that doctrinal preaching is almost a

thing of the past; and in its stead we have what is variously known as topical, practical, and sensational preaching. To satisfy one's self that this is true, it is only necessary to glance over the pulpit announcements of many of our cities in the great dailies. You will there see it announced that the Rev. Mr. So and So will preach on the following day upon "The relations of science to Christianity," or upon "The knowableness of the unknowable," or upon "How Jonah lost his umbrella," or "Words spoken by," etc.—which the people learned were "words," etc., and of which they had a living exemplification—or some kindred topic; but how seldom do we see it announced that any great and vital doctrine of Christianity will be the theme for pulpit discussion!

Such themes are regarded as dull and uninteresting, and the man who is known as a doctrinal preacher, no matter what his abilities may be otherwise, soon finds himself on the list of the "not wanted." Now, as the result of this course on the part of the pulpit, and this vitiated taste on the part of the pew, many of our people are uninformed as to the great fundamental truths of revelation, and others have entirely lost sight of them. The old lady who, when asked what she "thought of the doctrine of total depravity," said she "believed it was a good doctrine if properly lived up to," has many counterparts in the churches of today. Is it any wonder, in the face of these facts, that our young people are not faithful to their doctrinal inheritance?

The time was in the history of the Methodist Church when these things were not so; when the Bible was a familiar book in every home; and when, instead of novels, fashion books, and all manner of sensational literature for boys and girls, the word of God, the Catechism, and our Church standards were studied in every household. I heard one of the grandest women Methodism has produced in the West tell, in narrating her experience, that when she was converted to God and joined the Methodist Church, although she had been a gay, frivolous girl, devoted to society and fashion, she at once secured Wesley's *Sermons*, Fletcher's *Works*, the *Life of Hester Ann Rogers*, and other works of a like character, and made them, together with the Bible, her daily companions and study. I did not wonder, after hearing her story, at the magnificent Christian character she had developed and the fifty years of usefulness she had given to the Church. We can have no healthful church life, no stalwart Christianity, without knowledge of, and belief in, the great doctrines of our holy religion; and no stanch, useful Methodists, without knowledge of, and devotion to, her doctrines and usages.

Another cause of our deterioration is the insidious unbelief of the day.

And I do not now refer to the avowed infidelity and atheism of the times, although these are having their influence in breaking down the fidelity of our young people to their doctrinal inheritance. But I refer to the silent unbelief within our own

ranks. Not only are the doctrines of Methodism unknown and ignored by many within her communion, but I fear it is true they are disbelieved by many who know them. I am sure that I do not misrepresent the facts when I say that all the infidelity in the world is not to be found outside of church walls, but that much of it nestles securely in our pews from Sabbath to Sabbath. How large a proportion of our people to-day believe in the doctrines of the atonement, of the divinity of Christ, of justification by faith alone, of the witness of the Spirit, and of future retribution, in the sense in which the fathers believed them? I fear the proportion is not large, and that it is gradually growing smaller. Following this unbelief, we have weak or dead consciences, worldly and inconsistent living, and an emasculated, sentimental religion. And, as the result of this, the gulf between Methodism and many other faiths has been largely bridged, and the passage of our young people to other communions made comparatively easy.

A desire for social position and prestige is another cause, and I think a prominent cause, of want of fidelity on the part of many young people to Methodism. The idea prevails largely in some sections that all the wealth, culture, and social status in the community is outside of Methodist circles; that if young men or women desire position and influence they must leave the Church of their childhood and go elsewhere. And I am very sorry to believe that this is often used, by those who are

experts in the devil's dirtiest work of proselyting, as a leverage by which to unsettle and draw away our young people. Now, the truth of this assumption I, for one, am not at all willing to admit. I believe there is about as much good social standing among the Methodists, reckoned upon a right basis, as among any other denomination in the country. True, we may not have as fine theatricals, as magnificent card parties, and as gorgeous dancing clubs as some others; but when it comes right down to good square standing, in the eyes of God and men, I believe a good, faithful, loyal Methodist is about at the apex of the pyramid—and that is about as high as I care to get. And I believe another thing: that there are just as nice young men for husbands, and just as sweet girls for wives, in the Methodist Church as can be found in Christendom, and Methodist preachers can beat the world in tying the nuptial knot!

Now, as to the principle, or want of it, involved in a change of faith upon the grounds intimated, I have but little to say. The little fellow who, when asked where he went to Sabbath school, said, "I use to go to the Presbyterian, but now I go to the 'Piscopal, because they's got the highest steeple, and gives a fellow the most candy at Christmas," about sized up the crowd who go from church to church and from denomination to denomination after the loaves and fishes.

But we advance now to consider:

III. What is the remedy for all this?

Several things are necessary. And, first:

Let Methodism assert herself more fully.

It is true of a denomination, as of an individual, that if we want others to respect us we must respect ourselves. In my judgment Methodism was never designed to take a back seat in the gospel wagon, but to hold the lines and drive. I apologize to no man under the heavens for being a Methodist. My greatest source of gratification, next to that of being a Christian, is that I am a Methodist of the Methodists, born in a parsonage which was a part of a Methodist church edifice and had been solemnly dedicated to her service, reared in her communion, converted at her altars, sent forth to preach the gospel by her authority, and cheered and strengthened in my work by her noble history and grand achievements. I can adopt in the highest sense the language of that inspiring hymn:

> "I'm a Methodist bred,
> And a Methodist born;
> And when I'm dead,
> There'll be a Methodist gone."

Oh for loyalty to Methodism on the part of Methodists, and holy boldness in asserting her claims! Pardon me if I say I believe this to be the great need of Methodism in New England to-day. A good Christian woman said in morning prayer meeting at my church revival, years ago: "A young Methodist woman, who has come to Boston to attend school, rooms at our house. I invited her to come to this service. She said she would gladly do so, but had promised a Methodist lady to go with

her to hear a leading preacher of a denomination not evangelical, and she could not get back from prayer meeting in time to fulfill the engagement." Now, so long as this is true of scores of adult Methodists, our young people will not be loyal to their doctrinal inheritance. And so long as it is true that young Methodist people who come to New England for purposes of study go here, and there, and everywhere in preference to their own church, Methodism will not secure the respect she must have if she is to win the unconverted young people of New England to Christ. Oh for more self-respect and self-assertion in a good sense on the part of Methodism in New England!

It has come to me upon good authority that a few years ago, when the president of an important organization in our city was to be elected, although it was Methodism's turn to have the presidency and there were several Methodists on the Board of Directors, yet *they* assented to the statement when it was made by others, that there was no Methodist layman accessible who was competent to take the position; and hence Methodism was deprived of her representation, in turn with the other denominations, in the presidency of that organization, and will be for several years to come. Now, in the first place that statement was untrue. I can name half a dozen laymen any one of whom would have honored the position, and some of whom I know were available. In the second place, if the statement were in any sense true, had I been one of the directors I would have died before I

would have admitted it. I lately heard of a woman who has since left the Methodist Church—peace to her ashes!—who gave as one reason for her going that, when away in the summer, if the question was asked in company as to church relations she was ashamed to confess to what fold she belonged. Oh for a baptism of self-respect upon all the people of this region calling themselves Methodists! Then shall we see true and abiding prosperity.

In the second place, let there be doctrinal instruction in every department of the Church.

Let it begin with the pulpit. I do not believe the day for doctrinal preaching has gone by. Men may ridicule it, and call it the skeleton of theology, but experience has proven that theology separated from it is a mere shadow, without substance or form; a mere jellyfish, without bone or sinew. And it is a fact, worthy to be considered by pulpit and pew, that all the greatest revivals of the past have been the result of sound, earnest, doctrinal preaching. Such was the case in the history of the early Church. The apostles were doctrinal preachers. The first sermon preached under the gospel dispensation was a doctrinal sermon; doctrinal in the sense that it forcibly presented the divinity of Christ, his resurrection from the dead, and his atonement as the only source and means of salvation. And all the subsequently recorded sermons are of the same character; hence they had mighty revivals. And the same thing has been true ever since as to the connection between doctrinal preach-

ing and revivals. One has usually been the result of the other. Such was the case with regard to the Reformation in England and Germany; and such was the case with regard to the great American revivals under Edwards, Finney, Nettleton, and others. They all grew out of earnest presentation of the great doctrines of Christianity.

Then, again, let there be doctrinal instruction in our Sabbath schools. Amid the flood of instruction in geography, oriental customs, scientific speculations, and what not, let the Church Catechism have a chance. Then, amid the songs and ditties of the Church and Sabbath school, it would be well to give the Church Hymnal and Epworth Hymnal a little right of way. Then again let us have a little doctrinal instruction in the home. Instead of all manner of literature and fashionable amusements, consuming our time and dissipating our energies, let us follow the divine injunction to "teach these things to our children, and children's children," and we shall soon have a generation of young and old people who will be loyal to their doctrinal inheritance. I heard Dr. Upham tell some time ago of a young man whom he met on a train, who was reared in a Methodist home, and was once a Methodist, but is now a member of another denomination. And so thoroughly informed was he as to the doctrines of his present Church that even the sage doctor and theological professor was severely taxed in an hour's debate in maintaining his ground and defending the doctrines of his Church.

How many such young men have we in Methodism to-day? We have some, I am glad to believe. But we want more; we want this to be the rule among our young people instead of the exception. For, let it be remembered, this is a matter in which our young women are deeply interested, and in which we as a Church are deeply interested for them. Somehow the impression is abroad among the people of this land that Methodist girls make splendid wives; hence there is nothing more common than for young men in other denominations, when they are seriously considering matrimony, to cast their eyes in our direction. As Sam Jones says, "When I simply wanted to flirt and have a rollicking time I sought the girls in the ball room and parlor dance; but when I wanted a wife I went to a Methodist prayer meeting to find her." And so many a sensible young man to-day comes over into our territory when he wants a number one partner to preside over his parlor and dining room. And I have no objection in the world to this compliment thus paid to Methodist girls. What I do object to is that these same young men so frequently, after they have captured their prize, carry her off into other pastures not so green, and by other waters not so still. I want our girls to be loyal Methodists, so that they will be recruiting forces for Methodism, and not prizes to be carried off as trophies of the superiority of other denominations.

Thirdly, let our young people be loyal to our Epworth League.

Now, I do not believe I am narrow and bigoted in my views as to other denominations. While I gladly plead guilty to being an enthusiastic Methodist, I honor and bid Godspeed to all other denominations in their great work. I am glad we have other denominations. I do not believe in the possibility of organic unity between all denominations, and do not regard such unity desirable even if it were possible. All of our churches are better off and more vigorous because of honest, honorable competition between the various denominations. The only organic unity thus far offered by any denomination, so far as my observation extends, is that offered by the whale to Jonah. Doubtless from the whale's standpoint the very highest compliment he could pay the prophet was to thus offer to incorporate him into his own life by assimilation and digestion. But both Jonah and the whale learned after a short experiment that they were better off, and could do their work better, while apart. I believe in denominations, and in denominational loyalty. I like to see a Baptist a Baptist, and he usually is; and a Congregationalist a Congregationalist. What I thoroughly dislike is that conglomerate ecclesiastical creature known as a Congre-Baptis-Method-Episco-Nothingarian.

It is because I believe thus that I say our Methodist young people should be loyal to our Epworth League. It is founded upon a good basis; it has within it the elements of great usefulness and grand success; and it forms a bond of union between the young people of our churches the country over.

True, the objection is sometimes made that it has not quite so strong a pledge as some other societies; but then it needs to be remembered that it is not quite so necessary for Methodist young people to *swear* that they will take part in meeting as in the case of some others. They have been trained to it from the hour of their conversion, and have constantly had before them the good example of the older members of the church in that direction. There is no reason in the world why our Epworth League may not be the equal of any young people's organization now in existence.

If you have a strong Epworth League in your church the young people leaving you to go to other sections of our country will find a home in Methodism, where the young people's society to which they are accustomed is to be found, instead of being led into other ecclesiastical fields for the same reason. Furthermore, if you have such a League in your church, and the *Epworth Herald* and *Zion's Herald* are circulated among its members, your young people will be in process of training in the doctrines and usages of Methodism, and thus be prepared for useful membership in her fold, instead of being prepared by training and association for membership in some other denomination, where they may not fare so well. Hence I say, let our young people be loyal to this grand society.

May this grand company of young people before me go away from this convention more determined than ever before to be Methodists in the grandest sense of that term; to love and cherish her doc-

trines, practice her usages, be loyal to her economy, and maintain her honor and integrity while life lasts. Let us resolve here and now that we will stick to the old Methodist ship so long as she floats; and if she ever goes down that we will go down with her, with sails spread, with banners flying, with band playing, and with hallelujahs to God and the old Church on our lips.

## VIII.

# Importance of the Deaconess Work.

## VIII.

### Importance of the Deaconess Work.*

THE history of the particular Church represented by this gathering has been one of continuous providential development. That it was purely providential in its origin no careful student of history can for a moment doubt. God wrought through the labors of the Wesleys far better than they knew, and toward results concerning which they had never dreamed. That which, in their thought, was to be simply a temporary expedient for awakening new spiritual life in a decaying system of forms and ceremonies became, under his guidance, the mighty movement which was to meet and overcome one of the greatest crises in the history of Protestant Christianity, and in its results was to be as enduring as time itself. And from that hour until the present every emergency in the career of this Church has been as providentially and promptly met.

After it had become firmly established in this country it was led, largely through the labors of a converted drunken Negro, to project its great Missionary Society. As its labors in the more neglected portions of our land progressed, and the need of houses of worship for the unsheltered poor became apparent, its Church Extension Society was developed. When the fortunes of war threw upon the nation four millions of freedmen, to be trained

* Delivered at Metropolitan Temple, New York, April 28, 1897.

and prepared for Christian citizenship, its Freedmen's Aid Society was evolved. When our work in foreign lands was hampered because of the need of greater access to the homes of the people, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society came into being. When the dire needs of the black women in the South, and the growing wants of the white work upon the frontier, were pressing upon the Church for a solution, the Woman's Home Missionary Society sprang into being. When the question as to how to hold our young people to the Church and supply them with rational and healthful entertainment was becoming a serious problem, the Epworth League was born. And, finally, when the problems growing out of our complex modern city life were staggering the Church, the deaconess movement, like a divine evangel, loomed above the ecclesiastical horizon.

While I recognize the importance and value of all the great movements that have preceded it, and have been thus far enumerated, I do not hesitate to say that the one just named is second in importance to none that has come to the Church. And this for several reasons:

I. It supplies a hitherto deep lack in our Christian service.

When mankind came forth from the creative hand of God they came distinguished as male and female, and to each sex was given its own peculiar characteristics. To the male was given strength, force, ruggedness, and endurance. To the woman was given gentleness, lovableness, sympathy, and

patience. And these traits cannot be indiscriminately interchanged without serious injury to both. Transfer the distinctively feminine qualities to the male, and you at once have that universally unattractive personage, an effeminate man. Transfer the distinctively male qualities to the female, and you immediately have that most abhorrent of all modern creatures, a masculine woman. Yet all of these characteristics and qualities are necessary in carrying on the work of the world.

This is specially true of religious teaching and work. Any system of theology that is to appeal successfully to the great heart of humanity must have in it not only the strength and ruggedness of the masculine nature, but also the gentleness, winsomeness and persuasiveness of the feminine. It was in recognition of this great truth and need that these two natures were so beautifully blended in the person and character of Christ. With all his kingly power and majesty—and who ever had so much of these as he?—he possessed the gentleness and tenderness which attracted to him even the little children. They went to his arms gladly, because they unconsciously found in him the charm and grace which belong to the nature of woman. Not only were these gentler traits found in his personal character, but he ever proclaimed the divine nature as marked by those qualities which are distinctively feminine, such as love, purity, meekness, gentleness, sympathy.

Now, this was a radically new conception to the world. Before he came, revealing these sublime

truths, the divine nature had always been symbolized by the masculine traits. Such had been the conception of all heathen nations. Their gods were beings of force and power and strength. Such, also, had been the idea of the Old Testament prophets. Their God was a consuming fire. He abode amid the lightnings, thunders and blackness which crowned the summit of the mount which could not be touched. Even his forerunner, John the Baptist, seemed to have the same conception. His message was a stern one; "The ax is laid unto the root of the tree; unfruitful branches shall be burned." "The chaff shall be consumed with unquenchable fire," etc. But when Christ came he revealed the opposite traits of the Godhead.

He did this in his teachings. His beatitudes were all made up of the qualities which we, for the most part, ascribe to the feminine nature—purity of heart, poverty of spirit, lowliness of mind, forbearance, patience. In his life and labors he illustrated the qualities of both the masculine and feminine natures. In his rugged fidelity to the truth, his uncompromising hostility to wrong and injustice, we see the masculine elements of his nature: those elements which allowed the young ruler to go away and perish if he would; those elements that defended and saved, from her persecutors and sins, the accused woman in the temple; those elements that drove out of the temple with whip and lash its merchandising defamers. On the other hand, we see his feminine gentleness in his tears at the grave of Lazarus, in his bitter weeping over the doomed

city of Jerusalem, in his craving for human sympathy on the night of his betrayal, and in his tender care for his disciples and his grief-stricken mother. Hence in him the early Christians found all that was necessary to meet the deepest needs and longings of the human heart. But after a time this side of his nature, this aspect of Christianity, was overlooked, and the rugged side of both was alone presented to the world.

This has been specially true in the history of Protestantism. In its great reformatory movements it has had its rugged Luther, its uncompromising Knox, its inexorable Calvin, and its methodical Wesley. In these, and their teachings, all that is grand and majestic in the masculine side of our Christianity has been presented to the world. But Protestantism, in her teachings, has lacked the feminine elements. Romanism has understood this deep need of the human heart much better than we, and has made provision for it. For what is Mariolatry, or the worship of the Virgin Mary, but an attempt to find in the divine nature that which is gentle and womanly? The devout Catholic bows in worship before the Virgin because she represents to him the qualities of ideal womanhood and motherhood. This is one of the great sources of power in the Church of Rome. As the hurt child instinctively runs to its mother for sympathy, rather than to its father, so the human soul in trouble turns in longing, not toward majesty, power and strength, the masculine attributes of Jehovah, but toward pity, love, gentleness and sympathy, the

feminine qualities of the divine being. We have long given to the world the rugged elements of our theology, but we have not exhibited before men its gentler offices. In this deaconess movement, with its tender ministries of love, I see the possibilities of supplying this great need. In the loving ministrations of these consecrated Christian women that which has been so long lacking in our Christianity may and will be restored.

Again, the importance of this movement may be seen in the fact that,

II. It is the most Christlike of all our Christian service.

In saying this I would not for a moment depreciate the labors of the faithful men and women of our churches who are unselfishly giving money, time and toil to the work of the Master. Neither would I by this statement depreciate the Christian ministry. It is at once the grandest and most sublime calling on earth. But the work of the true deaconess is the most Christlike service because,

1. It is simply and purely a service.

It is not leadership in any sense; it is not even teaching; it is simply a service. In its highest expression it literally fulfills the words which the Saviour applied to himself, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." "I am among you as he that serveth." In its practical workings it is a reproduction of the great object lesson given by the Master to his ambitious and striving disciples when he performed for them the

menial service of washing their feet. Thus, the true deaconess finds her highest joy in being servant of all.

Now, I am sure there is no one lesson so much needed in the world to-day as the one taught by this feature of the deaconess movement. One of the greatest evils affecting society at present is found in the fact that a majority of its people believe they are in the world to be ministered unto; to be coddled, cared for, and waited upon; to have their interests made paramount in the thought of all, and to have all things contribute to their comfort, enjoyment and pleasure. One of the saddest facts connected with the church life of to-day is that the greater part of its members have not yet learned the sublime truth that their mission in the world as representatives of the blessed Christ is to minister, rather than to be ministered unto. Is it not true that the great question with too many in our churches is, "How much can I get out of the church through my connection with it?" rather than "How much can I put into it because of my relation to it?" Am I wrong when I say that the anxiety of too many is, "How much attention can I receive from the church?" "How much recognition can I secure?" rather than "How much can I minister to others?" "How much can I do to advance the interests of Christ's kingdom?" Surely, in these days, when the tendency of so many is to be ministered unto; when even Christians are seeking to get all they can out of their connection with the Church of God; when the

great question with so many is, "How can I get the greatest amount of ease and comfort out of life? and put into it the least of self-denial and self-sacrifice?"—at such a time the spirit and work of the deaconess is the most Christlike of any, and of the most infinite importance to the Church of God.

Again, it is the most Christlike service because,

2. It is a consecration of service to the whole man.

Not to the soul alone, not to the body alone, but to both soul and body. Now the modern Church, I fear, has talked too much about "saving souls," and has not thought sufficiently of the practical work of ministering to the bodies of men as well. The idea seems to have been that disembodied spirits were floating around in the ether above us, and we were to snatch as many of them as possible from their threatened doom. But all the human souls I have known have been clothed with human bodies, and with bodies which have many, and sometimes startling needs. Now, if we will study Christ's words and methods, we shall find that he talked but little about "saving souls." The greater part of his time was devoted to ministering to the bodily needs of the people. He healed the sick, he fed the people, and then preached the gospel to them. We need to emphasize this thought more than we do. Dr. Charles Parkhurst, Editor of *Zion's Herald*, has well said, in an able article in his paper:

"Matthew, in describing the beginning of Jesus's

ministry, says: 'And Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those that were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.' And will you notice the result: 'And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.' Jesus made use of healing to manifest his compassionate purpose, to overcome prejudice, and to draw human hearts to him. It was by the exercise of healing power that he gathered that great congregation on the mountain side when he delivered his inaugural sermon. Jesus heals as a preparation for his teaching, and as evidence that it is divine. 'But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) . . . Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.'

"It was a violation of the Jewish law to touch a leper. The Hebrew treated the leper as a loathsome outcast, and, more cruel still, taught that the disease was a penalty inflicted by God for personal sin. The religious Jew always shunned the leper. But there was one soul so large in its gracious ministry that it could not be hedged in by any tradition or law. Jesus kindly approached the leper, put his own pure hand upon his decayed flesh, and

with the calmness of the conqueror, but with the might of God, said, 'Be thou clean!' and his leprosy left him forever. A distinguished biblical critic says: 'His first act was to heal the leper; his second, to cure the centurion's servant, sick of the palsy and grievously tormented; his third, to restore Peter's wife's mother, sick of a fever; and then, when the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick.' Two thirds of all the miracles of which we have record are miracles of healing. Healing with him everywhere was the preface to, and confirmation of, his spiritual work.

"That this is true is unquestionably shown by the answer which he gave to the inquiry of John the Baptist. The proud spirit of the forerunner is so broken by long and cruel imprisonment, and the course of Jesus is so different from what John had mapped out for him, that the great soul is at last thrown into impatient and despairing doubt, and he asks, peremptorily: 'Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?' And Jesus only answered: 'The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.' It is not accidental that the Saviour of men mentioned the preaching of the gospel as the last manifestation and credential of Christianity. It is in harmony with his whole ministry. He healed first, and preached as he healed, or after he had healed."

The Germans have a name for the Saviour which constantly suggests this thought to them; the name "Heiland," which means "healer." Would that in our tongue we had a name for the Master which would so thoroughly portray his character. Now, in the deaconess work we are simply going back to Christ's original method, teaching men by deeds of kindness and helpfulness what Christianity really is. And who can measure the power of this method? Especially does the deaconess movement thus teach men through its hospital work. Here is the basal and imperative ground of obligation on the part of the Church to inaugurate and sustain the hospital. To again quote from the able article of Dr. Parkhurst:

"The Church, in doing the work of its Founder, must forever obey and imitate him. But, do you say, 'The Church does not possess the power to heal?' I answer, 'No, and yes.' No, if you mean that which is usually meant by 'faith healing.' That power is not lodged with the Christian Church. Yes, if you mean that the Church can heal by proper use of the wonderful discoveries in medical science and the skill and ministry of the physician and trained nurse. The physician and nurse, with the appropriation and use of the appliances of the hospital, can do almost everything that Jesus did, save to raise the dead; and, often, those sick unto death are thus raised to life. The hospital of to-day is able to present the unchangeable credential of Christianity. The hos-

pital, like the healing of Jesus, opens the door to the preaching of the gospel. This is the normal way to bring in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. Methinks the millennium might have come already if the Church had but followed the Christ method. First minister to the body, and then you can minister effectively to the soul."

We ought to have long ago learned this lesson from Romanism. Her strength is not so much in her teachings as in her bodily ministries. Her power is not so much in her priests as in her sisterhoods. Take away from Rome to-day her "Sisters of Charity" and "Sisters of Mercy," and you would rob her of the right arm of her strength. The labors of our deaconesses thus far in hospital work abundantly justify its prosecution.

Again, it is the most Christlike service because it is a service without money compensation.

This is true, no matter what you term that which the deaconess receives. She has no salary. There is before her no prospect or hope of an increase in compensation. No matter how faithfully she labors, no matter how long she may continue in her office, no matter though all her days be spent in this ministry, her remuneration, so far as money is concerned, remains the same. Now, I do not wish to imply that it is wrong to receive a salary. Under present conditions most Christian workers must have such a support. The teachings of the New Testament clearly justify such a course. "The laborer is worthy of his hire," are

the words of Christ himself. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" are the words of one who frequently labored with his own hands that he might be saved from taking anything from those whom he served. Yet, notwithstanding all this, it means much in these days of selfishness, when the great question with some Christian workers is that of salary, that these workers throw this question to the wind. Upon this point I cannot do better than quote again from Dr. Parkhurst:

"Years ago, when studying the New Testament for personal devotion, and to get at the whole mind of Christ, divested of inherited and traditional notions, I fell upon a phrase that was a new and startling revelation to me. I was reading Luke's report of the Sermon on the Mount, when I came to this verse: 'But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again.' The message, which burned its way into my thought as if sent straight from heaven, was that last clause, 'hoping for nothing again.' A glimpse of the disinterestedness which should characterize Christian effort was given me for all time. What a rebuke did Jesus utter to the unholy aspiration, the 'reciprocity idea,' which characterizes so much of Christian service! How very rare is the Christian minister who does his work without constant thought concerning the probable result, the return that will come to himself! 'Hoping for nothing again;' that is, to do the Master's work without any thought or expectation

of return in the way of advantage to the doer. To the women of our Methodism is given the glory of seizing this Christ-thought and incarnating it. God has always spoken his best truth to our elect sisters. John Wesley saw much; but his mother caught more of God's thought. Philip Embury and Captain Webb saw much; but to Barbara Heck was given closer and more pertinent vision. The Methodist men of our day and in our midst are seeing already much of God's thought; but Lucy Rider Meyer and our other leaders in this work have more positive indications of the mind that was in Christ. To serve suffering humanity, 'hoping for nothing again,' is the distinguishing foundation upon which the deaconess movement rests."

Again, the importance of this deaconess movement may be seen in the fact that,

III. It represents aggressive Christian service.

And what is more needed in our day than this? There seem to be two ideas prevalent in the world to-day with regard to the mission of the Christian Church. One is that it is a fortress, to hold the ground already won; and the other is that it is an aggressive agency, thrown into this lost world to run it down and capture it for the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, the great trouble is, too many Christians have espoused the first conception of the mission of the Church, and have thus practically reversed the divine commission. Christ nowhere says to his people, "Go and build churches, and invite the multitudes to come to

them ; and if they will not come your responsibility is ended." But he says to his Church, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Christ always says to the sinner, "Come," but to his Church he ever says, "Go."

This hugging of the Church is a kind of inshore fishing which was never pleasing to the Master. To-day he says to his Church as he did to the disciples of old, "Launch out into the deep;" "Go where the fish are." How graphically Mrs. Booth has put the matter in her simple illustration of a business man and his servant: "If you sent your servant to do something for you, and said, 'Go and accomplish that piece of business for me,' you know what it would involve. You know that he must see certain persons, running about the city to certain offices, and banks, and agents, involving a great deal of trouble and sacrifice. But you have nothing to do with that. He is your servant. He is employed by you to do that business, and you simply commission him to go and do it. What would you think if he went and took an office, and sent out circulars inviting your customers to come and wait on his pleasure and when they choose to come, simply put your business before them? You would soon dispose of such an agent." Now is this not practically what the Church is doing to-day? And as a result of this misconception we have what is known as the problem of the cities. And what a problem this is! The greatest facing the Church in this century. Not only because of the massing of populations in these cities, but also

because they are so rapidly becoming foreignized. And the sad fact is that as the foreign element comes in the native population goes out, leaving entire sections practically godless. But this would not be the case, the city centers would not thus have been given over to the slum element, had not the Church of Christ been recreant to its trust.

The trouble is that in all our cities the churches are found on a few of the best avenues, while whole districts are left without gospel privileges. And if there be a few churches left in these districts they are constantly trying to get out. So soon as the better class of people leave, the churches gather up their Bibles and hymn books and start after them. Now, this is a violation of the very spirit of Methodism. We are to go, not only where we are needed, but where we are needed most; and surely nowhere are we needed more than in the midst of the sin and degradation of these neglected districts in our cities. But this work cannot be done, this problem cannot be solved, on the basis of our past methods of church work. We must have more workers in our churches if our cities are to be redeemed.

When Christ sent out the seventy he sent them two and two. John Wesley followed the same plan with his laborers. In the beginning of Methodism in this country the same method was observed, and the results were correspondingly great. But in the late years we have abandoned this method. We send one man to these important fields; with the result that the man is over-

worked and the work is not done. I once heard Dr. Schauffler deliver a very important address in which he gave some facts and figures bearing on this subject. He said that a few years ago he studied the statistics of the several leading denominations in this city of New York. As a result he found that during six years, the Baptists gained 300 members, the Methodists 700, the Presbyterians 3,000, while the Episcopalians, during the same period, had a growth of 8,000, twice as many as the other three denominations combined. He then began to study the cause of this discrepancy, and found these interesting facts:

The Episcopalians in this city have 57 churches that have but a single rector, or in other words are singly manned. They also have 28 churches which are either doubly, trebly, or quadruply manned. He then found that the gain in the 57 churches during 18 years, beginning with 1872, was a little more than 8,000 members, while the gain of the 28 churches was 6,000. Then he looked at the gain of the Episcopal Church during 1891–92, and he found it to be 2,041 members, and of these the 57 churches that had one worker contributed 269, while the churches with several workers contributed 1,772 of the increase.

All of which goes to prove that we must return to our original methods of work. What a striking illustration of this truth is furnished us by the experience of this Metropolitan Temple. From a dying downtown church, with its one pastor and straggling congregation, it has become, through a

multiplication of its workers and a change in its methods, what we see it: one of the most aggressive and successful churches in Methodism.

The deaconess movement has in it the elements of such a return. The time ought to come when every Methodist church may have a number of such trained workers, and not until then may we hope to solve the problem of our cities. Thus the importance of this work is seen also in the fact that,

IV. It stands for intensely personal service. One of the greatest needs of our times is personal Christian service—and this in two regards:

First, as it relates to the individual worker. The tendency of the present day is to delegate Christian work; to perform even our charities by proxy. The time has actually come when we can hardly relieve a single human want without first organizing a society, with a constitution, by-laws, and a small army of officers and managers. We visit the sick by committees, dispense relief by paid agencies, and shed tears by proxy. Nay, more; this inventive age has found out modes of pleasuring self to relieve distress in others—has discovered the surprising art of extracting delight out of woe. Leaving to hired missionaries and committees the active duties of affording aid to the needy, gay crowds assemble in festive halls to eat fruits and creams in behalf of the suffering, and to dance all night in behalf of widows and orphans. Many people, even Christian people, are unwilling to come into personal contact with poverty and suffering. "A Christian woman," says a deaconess, "once gave

me a bundle of clothing with the remark, 'I have decided to give what I have to give through the deaconesses, for I find that the less I know of that sort of people the more sympathy I have for them.' Was there charity in that woman's gift? Truly, with that sentiment it was much better to give through the deaconesses, but it was a case of a little learning being a dangerous thing." Is it any wonder that deaconess was led to say: "Our system of charities is becoming a vast, a complicated, and in most cases an expensive system, and like other machinery it is driving, not hand labor, but heart labor out of the market. It becomes a burden to love our neighbor as ourself, and we will employ a deaconess to love him for us. We realize it is more blessed to give than to receive, but we must get even our blessedness at the bargain counter; a large slice of self-satisfaction for a small price of self-denial."

Now, the deaconess can never do the entire work of the Church in this direction. To quote from the words of one of these earnest sisters: "We need more deaconesses, but there will never be enough to take from any single member of Christ's kingdom the responsibility of loving and caring for those of his weaker brothers who come in his way. Rev. Mr. Barnett, one of the first 'settlement' workers in London, said, 'If to-morrow everyone who cares for the poor would become the friend of one poor person, forsaking all others, there would next week be no insoluble problem of the unemployed, and London would

be within measurable distance of becoming a city of happy homes.'"

How true all this is! If the deaconess movement should result in leading the members of our churches to believe that they need not do such personal work, then it must prove only an injury. But I believe it will have a very different effect from this; I believe the example of these consecrated women will inspire a similar spirit of heroism and self-sacrifice in the hearts of many of our Christian women, leading them out into similar blessed service.

The second direction in which consecrated personal service is needed is, as it relates to those who are to be labored with.

How much we need to emphasize the thought of the individual in this regard! We hear so much talk to-day about saving the masses, so much high-sounding declamation about saving society, that we have lost sight of the individual in the crowd. In our revival work we estimate results almost entirely by numbers. We must save the world by wholesale or not at all. We need to remember that the mass is made up of units, that society is a mere aggregation of individuals. We need to cease talking about the masses, and be more anxious about the individual. We need to be willing to do a retail business as well as a wholesale in this matter of soul saving. The Master has given us an example in this direction, and forever emphasized the value of the individual by the outstanding facts of his own ministry. His great ser-

mon on the New Birth was preached to a solitary individual, who came to him as an inquirer by night. His memorable sermon on the Water of Life was delivered to one sinful woman as he sat weary at Jacob's well at noon. In his matchless parable of the Lost Sheep it is the ninety-nine safe ones that are in the fold that are left without the shepherd's care while he goes to seek the one poor sheep that was lost.

The Christian Church began by placing the emphasis on the individual. Christ called Andrew and John to personal communion with him, and then to open discipleship. Andrew then found his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. Philip found his friend Nathanael and led him to the Saviour. And to-day the Master intends that the emphasis shall be on the individual. Here is where the deaconess movement places it. These consecrated women labor, not so much with and for the crowds, as face to face with the individual man or woman. Because of this fact the deaconess movement is of infinite value and importance to the Church and cause of Christ. And because of this fact I congratulate every woman who has consecrated her life to this blessed service.

My sisters, you are engaged in a service the nearest that of your Lord of any which I know; you are following more closely in the footsteps of your Master than any whom I have seen. Your reward, therefore, will be as great as that of any who appear before him on that great day. To quote once more from our New England editor:

"We do not know much about the judgment, but Jesus has left unmistakable revelation of the kind of service that will receive favorable consideration in the day of accounting. Anticipating that great day, and acting himself as the Judge, he said: 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me.' And, in order to lift a standard for Christian living that could not be misinterpreted, he pronounces upon those who did *not* thus minister to the needy and distressed this terrible sentence: 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' Ah! we need to take anew to conscience the tremendous leverage contained in that word 'Inasmuch.' Who dare belittle it or explain it away? The sense is clearly apparent and unmistakable. 'Inasmuch' as ye *have* done, or have *not* done, it unto the least of one of 'these my brethren,' carried all the difference between the smile and the frown of the great Judge."

Not only shall you have his smile, but by your side will be the radiant ones whom you by your loving ministry have rescued from sin and death. There is a jewel that is perfectly lusterless, without beauty or color, until shut up for a time within the human hand and subjected to its warm pressure. Then it flashes and gleams with all the splendor of the rainbow. So there are human

hearts and lives that are dull and worthless until they shall be warmed into life and beauty by the sympathetic touch of your hand and life. Then, throughout an endless eternity, *you* and *they* shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever and ever. May God bless you, dear sisters, and make you the messengers of mercy to thousands of weary, burdened souls, of the evangel of life to thousands who are now dead in trespasses and sins.

## IX.

# Perils Threatening our American Homes.

"God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land."—Psalm lxviii, 6.

"Have ye not read, . . . For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."
—Matt. xix, 4–6.

## IX.

## Perils Threatening Our American Homes.

WHAT a sad and fruitful field is suggested to our minds and spread out before our vision by the mere announcement of my theme this evening: "Perils which threaten our American homes." Who can doubt for a moment that there are perils —serious, startling perils—which threaten the destruction of our modern American home life! I say "American" home life because I believe we are in greater danger at this point than almost any other people. Even England, with its nobility and aristocracy, and Germany, with its rationalistic tendencies, have a larger and better home life than marks many of our American communities. I say "modern" American home life because there was a time when we were not in such danger in this direction. My purpose this evening shall be to briefly suggest these perils as I see them. Not all of them, for this would consume more time than is usually allotted to a sermon. I cannot speak of all the perils which arise from intemperance and bad literature, and which are so destructive in this direction. I shall only speak of those not ordinarily considered, but which in my judgment need prompt attention—and in some instances heroic treatment—if they are to be avoided and overcome. Among these I would name:

I. The want of home and family life, which at present so largely characterizes our American people.

It has been said by a foreign cynical critic of

our American institutions that "Americans have houses, but not homes," and this statement is not so far wrong as some might be inclined hastily to think. I am not so old as some who are before me this evening, yet I can recall a time, within my brief experience, when there was much more real family and home life among Americans than can be found at the present; a time when the home was the great center of interest and affection on the part of the entire family; a time when it was looked upon as a harbor of refuge, a place of safe retreat from all the annoyances and temptations of life; a place where all the members of the family could meet, at the close of the labors and trials of the day, for counsel, cheer, and mutual helpfulness. And if this be true in my experience how much more true is it in the experience of many who hear me at this hour. What could be more beautiful than the New England home life of fifty or sixty years ago! To my boyish fancy, as I read of it and heard of it while traveling in the West, it seemed the ideal home life of earth and a fitting type of the home life promised to God's children beyond the river. I need not tarry here to describe it; I could not do the subject justice if I should try. Suffice it to say that the average home life of to-day, and even the home life of New England, is a very different thing from that. And what has caused the change and this destruction of family life? Many things might be enumerated which have operated in this direction. Prominent among these I would name:

1. Our present modes of living.

In the earlier history of our country the people had homes. They did not simply stay in boarding houses, flats and hotels; they lived in a home. It may have been small and unpretending, but it was a home by itself, set off from other habitations, surrounded possibly by a little yard, in which were to be seen green grass, graceful trees and beautiful flowers; and in the rear was ever to be found the inevitable garden spot, with its toothsome vegetables for the table. Thus without the house was the court of the children, while within was the court of the women, where mother presided as the queen of the household; and still beyond that was the holy place, where father, mother and children together worshiped God. But how is it to-day? On every hand we have rows of solid brick walls, with little spaces set off by other brick walls, called "suites of rooms;" while in front is a little patch of bare ground, possibly surrounded by an iron fence and called a "lawn;" and in the rear is a place large enough to hold an ash barrel and a garbage box, and called a "yard." Perhaps in one such building many homeless families are housed, with no possible chance for retirement or privacy, and with no place for the children to play except in the street. And this condition of things is not peculiar to the city. It is found everywhere in the suburbs and in the country. In Brookline, the most beautiful suburb of Boston, most of the houses now being built are of this character. This is the day of the apartment house and of the apartment house life. For, if the change in the external conditions of

the home has been great, the change within the house from the home of the past is just as great. Who cannot recall the old-fashioned family sitting room, with its great open fireplace, its brightly polished andirons — the housekeeper's pride; the cheerful fire which snapped and crackled on the hearth, the comfortable rockers which sat invitingly around in front of the warm glow, and to which the family were irresistibly drawn after the evening meal to spend the closing hours of the day in social converse and in testing the qualities of the housewife's doughnuts and cider, or the nuts which the lads and lassies had gathered and stored away for just such hours as these. But how is it to-day? The only place of rendezvous in the house is a hole in the floor called a furnace register, out of which proceedeth dust, gases, and, usually when not wanted, cold air. To make the matter worse still, these attractive spots are in no particular room; hence there is no common meeting place for the family. After the evening meal father goes one way, mother another, John to his room, Mary to hers, and there is no family life.

Another thing which contributes to this sad condition is:

2. The hurry and bustle in which we live.

Our fathers took time to live and to become acquainted with their families. They were not in such haste to become rich; they were not so absorbed and consumed with the things pertaining to business life. They recognized that one of their first duties was to look after the home which God

had given them ; that the family growing up about them had greater claim upon their attention than the store or shop. Hence they did not look upon the hour spent at the table with wife and children three times a day as lost, nor the evening spent in the home circle as squandered. But how is it now? Many men do not spend sufficient time at home to know their own children or to have their children know them. I have a profound sympathy with the little boy who came running into the house crying, and when asked by his mother for the cause of his tears said, " The man who sleeps here nights whipped me." I knew a boy in Boston who, when urged by his mother to consult his father about a matter concerning which he was seeking advice from her, excused himself from such a course by saying, " I do not feel well enough acquainted with father to talk with him on such a subject." And why should this seem strange when so many men spend all their time and strength at the store, the office, the shop, or the club, and look upon their home as simply a way station in their rushing life, where they are to stop fifteen minutes for refreshments, and a lodging apartment where they are to spend the few hours at night which they can give to sleep?

3. The omnipresent club life of these modern times is another thing which contributes greatly to this demoralization of home and family life.

It has gotten to be the case in these latter days that in their individual homes men cannot find the comforts, conveniences and follies for which they long; hence a number join together and form a

club, and then build or buy a clubhouse. Boston is beginning to be full of such places. Now, I do not intend to condemn indiscriminately these clubs and clubhouses. There are, doubtless, clubs and clubs. But what is a clubhouse at its best? A place where young men who ought to have families live what is known as a "club life," and where men who ought to be with their families congregate to smoke, play cards or billiards, and sometimes to drink, and do various other things. Now, I may be all wrong on this subject, and shall undoubtedly lay myself open to severe criticism for what I am about say, but I must say it. According to my belief, grounded, I am sure, upon the teachings of this book, no man who is a husband, or father, or both, has any right, in the sight of God, to sever himself from the society of wife and children and spend his time in places from which they are either entirely excluded or, at best, not welcome except at particular times. A man said to his wife not long ago, "My dear, we shall soon have all the comforts of home at our club." "My dear," was the reply, "the question that troubles me and the children is, When shall we have all the comforts of your club in our home?" Quite a pertinent question! Suppose the wives of our communities should begin to form clubs and build clubhouses, and then spend their time in them, even in so harmless an amusement as female gossip. What a howl would at once go up from the noble men of our towns and cities; what eloquent talk we would at once hear about womanly propriety, and woman's sphere, and

the duties of mothers staying at home to take care of their children! But why should not women do that which men think it entirely proper and right to do? Who gave the lords of creation liberty to utterly ignore all the claims of home and family upon them, while at the same time binding these claims upon the women of the household with chains of steel? I tell you, my friends, that one of the greatest evils that has yet afflicted our country is this modern club life, and to it, as much as to any one cause, must be attributed the threatened decay and destruction of our American home life. Why is it that so many of our young men do not marry in these latter times? Why is it that the race of bachelors is multiplying so rapidly? Simply because these young men are substituting for God's order, "the setting of the solitary in families," this club life, which they are pleased to term "a life of freedom and single blessedness;" and thus the purposes of high heaven are frustrated, and the natural order of society overthrown.

4. The demands of fashionable society also lead to this destruction of family life in these latter times.

And how exacting these are to-day! If we had homes such as New England once had, with such a life as I have described, we could still have no home life without a change in this regard. What with calls and parties, receptions and musicals, balls and theaters, few evenings remain to be spent at home; and these must be given to obtaining the sleep necessary to prepare for the next round of dissipation. Instead of the family gathering in the

evening, such as I have described, the various members of the home cannot gather even for a few moments around the hole in the floor, because John must dress for the theater, and Mary for the reception, and mother for the Browning Club, and father for something else. Does this sound like an exaggerated statement? Am I overdrawing the picture? To demonstrate that I am not let me give you an account of what actually occurred in a respectable home not long ago. A remarkably attractive, home-loving woman tells the following story of her attempts to keep her husband and children at home during one evening. She arranged everything about the house most carefully, so as to make the rooms appear cheerful and cozy; had plenty of light, pleasant fires in the grates, dressed herself attractively, and in every possible way made her home as much like the ideal home as a woman could. Immediately after supper her husband rose hurriedly from the table, rushed into his overcoat, and excused himself very ruefully, as he looked about the cozy rooms, by saying, "There! I've got to catch that car. I promised Robinson to see him down at his house about that little transfer. Sorry to go, you look so nice here, but I don't see how I can help it." So he tore out of the house after the car. The eldest daughter then said she must go up stairs and get ready for a concert to which she had been invited by two other young people. Very soon they came and she departed. "It looks too bad to be going like this all the time," she said, regretfully, as she

went out; "I wonder if we shall have an evening at home before long." She was hardly out of the house before the two boys came in where their mother was sitting and said they must go to a committee meeting of their College Literary Society. They went out; and the third son and second daughter, after reading a few minutes, were called out by a neighbor to run over and have some games with them. They went, and left the mother alone in the house. "I sat there and cried," said this charming woman, "to think that with all my best efforts, I could not keep my family with me one evening. The next night was a repetition of the first, and so on for the entire week. I have not had my husband and my sons and daughters all at home in the evening since the children were too small to go out. I cannot recall one evening during the last five years, except occasionally on Sunday, when we have all sat down together to enjoy our own home circle." Now this is all wrong. Who is to blame for it? Let some wise woman or mother tell us. When the demands of society are stronger than the rights and pleasures of the home circle it is time that a protest was entered against the tyranny which is destroying the real home feeling, even in our so-called Christian families.

And another protest is needed in an entirely different direction. If there be young children still in the home, too young, perhaps, to join this exodus, these have no time for contributing to an evening's pleasure in the home circle because of

the pressing demands of that modern abomination known as "home lessons." Is it not true that the children of our homes are being sacrificed to the inexorable demands of an utterly false system of education? A child of eleven or twelve years of age comes home with lessons to be learned during the evening which in many instances would test the ability of an adult graduate in the same limit of time. The attention of a party of gentlemen who were in conversation upon the corner of a street in one of our large cities was drawn to a child who was weeping bitterly while evidently on her way to school. One of the gentlemen kindly called her to him, and inquired as to the cause of her tears. She replied that she had been unable to do all the problems in her home lessons and was afraid she would be punished by her teacher. "Let us see them," said the gentleman, "perhaps we can help you." She gave him the book, but neither of the gentlemen could solve the dreaded problems—although one was the president of a bank, another an eminent lawyer, and the third a prominent merchant of that city. With the young children of our homes under such a merciless educational Juggernaut, how can there be any home or family life? Sometimes I fear this rush—this demoralized condition of things—is contributed to somewhat by:

5. The demands of the Church, and religious work.

It is possible so to multiply our services that consecrated Christians, who desire to meet every apparent obligation, can have no time to spend

at home with their children. It is also possible to multiply Christian activities until the heathen and the masses get more of our time and sympathies than the little outcasts who run the streets bearing our names. I believe there is a vast amount of religion in a home hour on the Sabbath—an hour in which parents and children shall talk with one another of holy things and sing together the songs of Zion. In my judgment, Mr. Spurgeon never said a better nor truer thing than when he uttered the following: "Let no woman boast in my presence of her piety and grace, or of her desire to be useful in the world, while at home her house is dirty and out of order, her children unwashed and unkempt, and the buttons off her husband's linen. Let her first use soap and water at home, and needle and thread, and then tell of her desire to work for her Master." The same exhortation applies with equal force to men in their sphere and in their relation to the home.

Another peril which threatens our American homes grows out of:

II. The absence in them of family government and family religion.

And who does not know that I am right when I say these are absent in many homes? I know we are apt to look on the family government which marked the homes of the past, and especially our New England homes, as too rigid, and to smile at the methods once employed for promoting religion in the family. Now, doubtless the old system of ruling so sternly with the rod, and the old system

of religious home instruction with its frequent visits of the dominie armed with the Catechism, to the terror of all the children of the household, was not the ideal system in either direction, and would not be thoroughly adapted to our day and conditions. But these old systems produced a grand set of men and women, and in getting away from their rigidness and severity we have swung over to an unwise and loose latitudinarianism. In how many homes to-day, and even professedly Christian homes, such a thing as family government is absolutely unknown! Children do about as they please, and father and mother are helpless before them; yea—worse than that—are under their domination. How many parents there are who are ready to confess that they cannot secure obedience on the part of their children; that they cannot secure their attendance upon the church services, or Sabbath school; that they cannot control the character of their associations, nor the character of their places of resort. Is not such a condition of things sad in the extreme? And does it not threaten Church and State with a peril beyond description? A lawless child is apt to prove a lawless man. A child who deliberately resists and overthrows the rightful authority of home is not the material out of which to make a good man and a good citizen. How many homes to-day are mourning the downfall of sons and daughters whose first lessons in insubordination and stubborn gratification of passion and appetite were learned in a home where parental authority was neither exercised nor respected! That parent who allows his

authority to be despised, and the laws of home to be overriden, is preparing his children for shipwreck and ruin. And if family government be wanting in many homes how much more is family religion lacking! This not only in the homes of the godless and churchless masses, but even in the homes of many professed Christians. How few are the homes relatively to-day where family prayers are observed, or in which there are stated seasons for religious conversation and instruction. In how many professedly Christian homes there is nothing bearing the semblance of an act of Christian worship from one end of the year to the other. There is no reading of the sacred Word, no prayer, no utterance of any kind to indicate that Christ has any place in the home. True, the walls may be ornamented with artistically wrought and beautifully framed mottoes calling upon God to bless the home, but all the conduct of the day shows plainly that these mottoes are indeed only for ornament, and the sheerest mockery of the God of heaven. A little boy from such a home said to a companion, "Pa gave ma a good scolding this morning, and you ought to have seen her throw the teapot at his head!" "Did she hit him?" inquired the other, excitedly. "No," said the boy; "he dodged; but she smashed the motto above his head." "And what was the motto?" inquired the other. "'What is home without a mother!'" was the reply. Now that little boy simply described in an exaggerated way the spirit and tone of many homes to-day. In the morning all is hurry and bustle, the meal is hastily

eaten, the father rushes to the store, office, or shop, the mother to her daily task, while the children are hurried off to school. There is no time for prayer in that home; not even for a blessing at the table. All day long the moments and the thoughts are given to the concerns of life, and, when evening comes, the amusement, the visit, or the chat consumes the time until the tired body must seek the repose it needs, and there is no time for honoring God. What must be the influence upon the children who go out from such a home? The want of religion in the home is one of the perils of the hour.

Another peril threatening our American home life, and one growing out of the absence of family government and family religion, is:

III. The loose conceptions which prevail concerning the character and obligations of the marriage relation.

What could possibly be more sacred than the marriage relation? It was instituted by Jehovah himself; it has the divine sanction throughout; it is typical of the union between Christ and his Church; it is the basis for human life and the very foundation of society. What obligations could possibly be more solemn than those connected with it? Yet how lightly these obligations are regarded in many quarters, and how easily this relation is set aside. The perils to our homes growing out of these loose conceptions present themselves especially under three aspects.

1. In the unwillingness on the part of many to have a family.

Shall I be regarded as indelicate if I discuss for a moment this ever-increasing cause for alarm to us as a people? God's first and great command to the man and woman he had made was, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." Again we are told, "God setteth the solitary in families." Now, he designs that there shall be families. Not only husbands and wives, but fathers and mothers and children. Any other condition of things is abnormal and revolutionary in the sight of God. In the history of the early patriots we see obedience to these divine commands and conformity to the divine intention. We also see that the blessing of God rested on his servants and handmaidens and upon their children. What grander picture of family life can we have than that presented to us in the records of these early patriarchal homes? But how is it to-day? How few families we have in the true sense of that term! True, we have fathers and mothers, and perhaps one child or two at best, but where are the grand families in which we find God's ideal as described in the 128th Psalm: "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table." Are they not few and far between? And why is this? I know that physical weakness is sometimes the cause; but is not the cause in numberless instances to be found in a desire on the part of the parents to avoid care, and to remain free from the interruption which children bring in the way of a life devoted to fashion and folly? Do you tell me that such a subject ought not to be referred to in this

presence? Then I say to you that it is impossible to discuss the perils which threaten the home to-day and leave this out. And let me say, further, that here is the rock upon which our social system will split if there is not a reformation speedily, and the rock also upon which our national life will go to pieces. With immigrants pouring in upon us from all shores continually, and with an alarmingly large native population born of foreign parentage, and with a constantly diminishing population born of native Americans, we shall soon cease to be an American nation in any true sense of that term. In this commonwealth the mother of foreign birth has on the average fifty per cent more children than the mother born in this country. In some of our cities, and very widely in rural communities, it looks as though there was a growing intention, even at the cost of good morals and law, to let the inferior classes rear most of the children. Thus the task of training those who are to be the parents of the next century is being turned over to the classes least fitted for the work, to the peril both of the Church and State.

Another form in which this peril presents itself grows out of,

2. The alarming extent to which marital vows are ignored and violated by thousands to-day.

I shall not discuss this suggestion at any length. It is not necessary that I should. But that here is a peril threatening destruction to our American homes is a fact which cannot be denied by any but a blind man. To know how great it is we need

only to interview the officers of our police force, and to obtain testimony from any of our reputable physicians. For if we think this is a peril which threatens only the homes of the poor and depraved we shall find ourselves sadly in error. There are homes of wealth and culture all over our land to which it is sheer sarcasm and irony to apply the term home, because of the constant ferment and disruption which mark them, growing out of infidelity to marriage vows on the part of either husband or wife or both. Could we know all the facts belonging to this question we should be startled beyond measure; and in some instances our churches would be thrown into excitement and confusion. I know whereof I speak, and I say to you, this evening, it is time a halt be called in this direction.

But, not to pursue so unpleasant a thought further, I would call attention to only one other form of this peril, or to one other form under which it presents itself. This is in,

3. The ease with which the marriage relation is so frequently set aside.

I do not intend to go into a discussion of the question of divorce. I have not time for this, and it is not necessary. We are more or less familiar with the startling statistics in this direction. In many of our States the divorces granted amount to from five to ten per cent of the marriages solemnized; and in others from ten to fourteen per cent. Then when you add to this large percentage of divorces actually granted the petitions which are

denied, and then add to this still the large number of families dissolved by desertion and other means, without legal process, you can begin to form some conception of the peril to our homes in this direction. Instead of one cause for the separation of those once united in this sacred relation, the one which is warranted by the teaching of our Saviour, we now have half a score or more grounds for divorce, some of them so slight and trivial as to make the plea of those seeking a dissolution of these bonds seem little better than a farce. Indeed, so many are the grounds upon which a legal separation may now be sought, and so easy are the terms upon which such separation may be obtained, that I do not wonder that a certain woman, restive under the restraints imposed upon her by the relation, should have written to a Chicago lawyer for a divorce without stating any cause at all, and inclosing a two-cent stamp to pay the postage upon it by return mail. What must be the condition of the homes of our country when those who should be the very heart and soul of the home, and the twofold clasp which should eternally and firmly bind the family together, know that at any time, when they may find the bonds which unite them a restraint, they may have them easily and quickly severed, and are ready without fear or hesitancy to reverse the divine edict, and say, "What God hath joined together let man speedily put asunder."

Such then is the condition of much of the home life of to-day, and such the peril which threatens

what remains. What grander mission can any Christian have than to seek to save and elevate our American homes? What grander thing can anyone do for Christ than to seek to make the home in which he or she lives a type of what a Christian home should be? I believe it is well for Christians to help the poor, to visit the sick, to minister to the distressed in every way; but I believe it is also a grand thing for them, by their spirit and personal example, to teach men and women that one of the first and highest duties belonging to them in this life is to make the home God has given them a place of refuge to the tempted, of safety to the weak, and of holy, happy training to all. The nearest type of heaven of which we know anything on earth is a happy Christian home. The nearest type of hell is a home in which discord and chaos run riot. Let every Christian woman adorn her home by a gentle, Christlike spirit, let every Christian man make his home the supreme object of his thought and affection, and the day will not be far distant when to every man, woman and child home will indeed be the dearest spot on earth; yea, the dearest spot in the universe this side of the paradise of God.

# X.

# The First Christian Church.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—Acts ii, 42.

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things that he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."—Acts iv, 32, 33.

## X.

## The First Christian Church.*

IN the words of the text we have a concise yet glowing description of the early Christian Church as it was in the days of the apostles. I have selected them because of their special appropriateness to the occasion. To-day you reoccupy your beautified temple for worship; to-day you stand upon the threshold of enlarged possibilities as a religious organization. If you are to have success in your work as a church during the years to come, much will depend upon the spirit in which you enter upon this new era in your history. I would not therefore trifle away these valuable moments by any indulgence in mere oratory or rhetoric, but desire to say some things that may be profitable to you in your future work as a church of the living God. We hear a great deal said to-day about the weakness of the Church. It is constantly asserted that the Church is losing her power, and many are the causes that are assigned for this calamity. I wish to speak this afternoon of the strength of the Church, and especially to call attention to those elements in her character which truly constitute her strength. I believe you have a desire to succeed as a church; to do a great work for God in this community. But the question is, "How may you best insure this success? How may you most certainly accomplish this work?" We have in the words of the text the record of a church that did succeed in the highest

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sense, and that in the face of difficulties of which we know nothing. If we can discover, therefore, what were the elements of her strength and success we shall be greatly helped in the solution of the problems. Notice, then,

I. What were the chief elements of her strength, as we may learn them from this history?

In answering this question I would glance at the subject negatively, for a few moments, and notice in what her strength did not consist.

1. Not in great numbers.

Now, an idea prevails largely at the present day that in order to success in any church, there must be large numbers. We must have a crowd, and thus impress the world by our very immensity. Hence the great aim of too many churches, and ministers also, is to increase their number; to swell their church roll; and in too many instances they are not overscrupulous as to the means employed in securing this result. I would not for a moment depreciate a large membership. A large church roll may be a good thing. And we are certainly to seek the enlargement of Zion; to bring the people into the Church and into the kingdom of God. But what I wish to say is, that large numbers are not an indispensable condition of success in church work. This was not an element of strength in the early Church. Their number was not large. On the contrary they were few in number. At the death of Christ there seem to have been but one hundred and twenty disciples in the Holy City. That was a small number for a

great city like Jerusalem. And, although three thousand souls were added to the church on the day of Pentecost, yet these were from all portions of Palestine, and so soon as the feast was over they would go to their homes. Hence the number who remained in the city was not great. And yet, from the time they numbered but one hundred and twenty until the time specified in the text, they had enjoyed marvelous power and success. As to whether large numbers are a benefit to a church to-day—it depends entirely upon the character of the persons who help to swell the numbers. Sometimes I think a large roll is really a hindrance to a church, because of the tendency of the people to depend upon others to do the work which should be done by themselves individually. I have seen large churches that were dead, and worthless, and small ones that were a power.

2. Nor did her strength lie in wealth.

Another idea that prevails in many quarters is that a church must be wealthy in order to success; must have great means at its command. Hence the question with some churches with regard to applicants for membership is, "Have they money? Can they pay liberally?" Now, I would not affect to despise wealth—not even in the Church. Money is a talent for good, and great good can be done with it. But it is not absolutely necessary to success. This was not an element of strength in the early Church. While a few, like Joses and Ananias, may have had land the majority of its members were poor, very poor; doubt-

less had little more than was absolutely necessary to meet their wants. We know that they were in financial distress, so that contributions were taken in other churches in their behalf. Yet they had marvelous success. And so to-day I believe a church may have the very highest success without wealth. Indeed, I sometimes think that wealth in a church is an actual disadvantage. Many people while they are poor are devoted to God; but let them once become rich and they immediately wander away. The same thing is true of churches. There are churches in this country that were once a great power for good, but they were then poor and struggling. Now they have become rich, and say they have need of nothing, and to-day they are shorn of their strength. Never was Methodism a greater power in the land than when her people were poor; when they came directly from the masses. And an evil day will it be in her history when she turns away from the poor and seeks only the rich. Wealth is not an essential condition of success in church life.

3. Her strength was not in social prestige.

This is another thing which is beginning to be looked upon in our day as a necessary element of success. If the people of a church are largely from the more intelligent and cultured ranks of society, and have social standing, this will render the church popular; will attract the people. Hence many churches seek for this. The great question with reference to those who are to be admitted to their ranks is, "Are they genteel?

Do they move in the best circles?" Now, social standing, like everything else that is helpful to man, is a talent—to be made the most of, and not to be despised. But it is not absolutely necessary on the part of a church in order to success. This was not a factor in the strength and power of the early Church. While its members were doubtless respectable people yet they had but little social standing in Jerusalem. None of them were recognized in the synagogues; none of them were admitted to the upper ranks of society. And yet they were marvelously successful as a church. And so to-day social prestige is not an essential element in the success of any church. Many churches have this in the superlative degree and yet are mere ciphers in the world, while others, without it, are doing a grand work for God and humanity. Never in her history was the Methodist Church more successful than when her people were tabooed by aristocratic society and stigmatized as crazy fanatics. Many of you can remember the time when it cost a young man or woman all social standing to join the despised sect. And never was the Methodist Church a greater power than at that time. Social prestige then is not an essential condition of success in Christian work.

4. Her strength was not in grand surroundings.

Another idea which prevails too largely in our day is, that we must have grand churches, grand music, and eloquent, scholarly preaching, if we would succeed in our work. But this is a great mistake. These things did not enter into the

secret of the success of the apostolic Church. They had no great churches. They were largely shut out of the temple, and out of the synagogues. They worshiped mainly in private houses, or in some plain, unfurnished room. They preached mostly upon the streets and in the market places. They had no musical instruments of any kind. Their only music was the united voices of the people, singing the praises of God. They had little of what is known as eloquent preaching. The apostles simply told in a straightforward way the story of the cross, and they had great success. Now, I would not affect to despise the things just mentioned. I would not say we ought not to have them. I believe we should have nice churches, good music and good preaching when these things can be properly obtained—without the sacrifice of principle and spirituality. But that they are absolutely indispensable to success, or even true elements of success, I do not believe. Some of the finest churches in the country, those having the grandest church buildings and the most superb music and so-called eloquent preaching, are doing little for the cause of truth and righteousness, while others that have none of these things are grandly pushing forward the conquests of the cross. Perhaps no body of people ever did more good than the old Scotch Covenanters at a time when they were driven from the towns and cities of their native land and were compelled to worship amid the rocks and in the glens of the mountains. And

never perhaps was Methodism a greater power in winning souls for Christ than when, shut out of the churches by the authority and jealousy of a state ecclesiasticism, her people worshiped in the fields, and her preachers proclaimed the blessed gospel from stumps, and wagons, and tombstones, or whatever could be improvised into a pulpit. The trouble is that, where these external conditions exist, the tendency of the people is to rely upon them for success; and they always prove a broken reed.

But, now turning to the positive side of the question, I would say among the elements of strength in the early Christian Church was:

1. Their fidelity to the truth.

We are told, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." I do not understand by the term doctrine, as here used, any formulated creed such as we have to-day. They had nothing of this kind. Even the gospels as we have them were not then written. They had to rely for their instruction entirely upon the Old Testament and the oral teachings of the apostles. But to these they were faithful. They accepted the great truths of the gospel, believed them with all their heart, and faithfully maintained them before the world. And this they did in the face of the darkness and skepticism which surrounded them. The chief truths taught by the apostles were the divinity of Christ, his resurrection from the dead, and the possibility of obtaining eternal life through him. All these the rebellious Jews denied. They

had crucified the Son of God because of his claim to divinity; they denied his resurrection from the dead; and hooted at the idea of salvation through him. But these faithful disciples maintained their belief, and asserted it in the face of their mockings and derision.

And this is an element of strength in the Church of God to-day; steadfastness in doctrine, fidelity to the truth. And by doctrine I do not mean so much the dry doctrines which have been formulated and fought over by theologians, but the simple truth of God as found in this book. There are great truths taught here which every Christian must know and maintain in order to his soul's salvation; the great truth of the spirituality of God, the deity of Christ, the atonement made by him, the resurrection from the dead, the final judgment, and the eternal life or death beyond that. All these we need to know and teach. But how little of earnest belief in, and teaching of these great truths is found in many churches to-day. The tendency of our day is to deride doctrine and glorify life. While this is important, we need also belief in the truth, and fidelity to it. Too many Christians to-day will not endure sound doctrine. They have "itching ears," which demand something new and strange, and are constantly blown about by every wind of unbelief. Let some infidel come along and they are immediately unsettled, and are afraid to avow their beliefs. We need conviction on this subject of fidelity to the truth. Without this no Church can

succeed. The Churches which have impressed themselves most upon the world are not the creedless ones, but those which have positive beliefs and the courage and fidelity to maintain them. Sometimes I think it is a misfortune that the days of controversy are gone by, for then the great doctrines of the Church had to be preached in order to defend them.

Another element of strength was:

2. The maintenance of Christian fellowship.

"They continued steadfastly in . . . fellowship." And by the term fellowship I understand Christian communion, brotherly love, and mutual helpfulness. No one who has read the New Testament carefully can fail to see that great prominence is given in it to this element, fellowship. We cannot tell just what we mean by it. It is hard to define. But we all recognize it at once when we see it, and we can all feel it when we come where it is. When we go into a church, or a company of professing Christians, and are met with a glad welcome, a cordial grasp of the hand, we say at once, "Here is Christian fellowship." But when we go where all is cold; where those whom we meet shake hands with us as though they feared we had some contagious disease, and where all is stiff and formal, we say, "There is no fellowship here." Now this indescribable something these people enjoyed and maintained. There is no more beautiful pen picture to be found in the Bible than is given here. Hear the language: "And they continued steadfastly in . . . fellowship, . . . and in prayers. . . . And breaking bread from

house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people." Is not that a beautiful picture? O that it might be reproduced in the world to-day. What a power would such a church be in the nineteenth century! They loved one another; they helped one another; they broke bread together at each others' homes; they met each other with joy upon the streets, and the unbelieving world looked on and wondered and admired. I should like to have been at one of their meetings. I should like to have heard them sing, and speak, and pray. I should like to have heard the shouts of triumph that went up from their midst and to have seen them shaking hands and rejoicing together after the meeting was over. I am sure it would have been good to be there. We need more of this element of fellowship in our churches to-day. We often sing,

"Blest be the tie that binds,"

and the truth of this beautiful sentiment ought to be realized constantly in our association with one another. We must show to men that there is something in the Church of God not to be found elsewhere; not in lodges or any secular organization; a love, a sympathy, a helpfulness of which the world knows nothing. Then will they be drawn to the Church "as the doves to their windows."

3. Fidelity to Christian ordinances was an element of strength.

We are told, "They continued steadfastly . . . in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Also that, "They continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house." Now this implies two things. They were faithful in their attendance upon God's house and in maintaining his ordinances. I do not understand that they went to the temple to preach, but to worship. And so in "eating bread from house to house" I understand, not that they simply ate a social meal together, went visiting, or to evening parties; but that they met and ate in their religious feasts. In short, that when divine worship was held, whether in the temple or some private house, they were faithfully in their places.

We see an illustration of this fact at Pentecost. At the close of a ten days' prayer meeting, when the Spirit fell upon them, they were all present—the one hundred and twenty disciples, and so it was still. Their love feasts were full; their prayer meetings were full; and when the apostles preached they were there to help. Hence the people saw that they were in earnest, and were impressed. And this is an element of strength in any church to-day, fidelity to the ordinances of God's house. Give me a people who are thus faithful and I will assure their success. A great deal is often said about the importance of having a man in the pulpit who can compete with the other pulpits in the town, and the great cry to bishop and elder is for a man who is the peer of the other pastors in the place, and who can hold a congregation. But there is

another side to that question. A church must have a lot of people in her pews who can compete with those in the pews of other churches in their attendance upon the house of God. I tell you, my friends, that the church where the people go to the services regularly and promptly will be successful. I care not what disadvantage they labor under otherwise: they may be badly located, they may not be among the more popular of the denominations, yet if the people are faithful to the services of the sanctuary they will compel attention and make themselves felt; the community will soon begin to be interested in them. Nothing more surely discourages unconverted people from attendance upon any church than the absence of its members. People naturally feel interested in a success and take but little interest in a failure. When they go to a church and find the pews empty their logical reasoning is, "If the people who belong here, and have their money invested in this enterprise, do not feel enough interest to be present there is no reason why I should attend." There is no surer way to have a large congregation than to have a large congregation. This may sound like a truism, but it has a meaning. Let the members of a church fill up the pews and the world will want to look in and see what is going on.

Still another element of her strength was:

4. The spirit of unity which prevailed.

We are told they were of one accord: "of one heart and of one soul." In other words, they were thoroughly united. And this is what we need to

be, or any church that desires success. But there are two senses of the word unity. One implies the absence of quarreling. And this is important. No church can succeed when it is disturbed by dissensions and divisions. Many churches that to-day are having no success may find the cause in the feuds and differences which exist among their members. The world has an idea that religion ought at least to make men peaceable. Men read that, when it was heralded into the world by the chorus of angels, the proclamation was, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth," and they conclude that where peace is not religion is not. And they are right in their conclusions. I would not give much for a religion that will not enable a man to live in peace with his brethren. The very lowest thing we ought to do, if we are really Christians, is to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Unity, in this sense, is important, but it is not everything. We hear churches boast of their unity. They say, "We are at peace; we have no quarrels with one another," when really they are not united at all. More is involved in Christian unity than this. It means unity in the sense of oneness of purpose, spirit, and work. There must be a spirit of hearty unanimity in all methods of church work and in their prosecution.

A man may often be as much of a hindrance to an enterprise by simply withholding his sympathy and cooperation as though he opposed it. I have known persons who threw a damper upon every enterprise in the church by simply letting it severely

alone. I would rather have a man's opposition than his cold indifference. Hence I say that the unity we need is enthusiastic cooperation. The church that is blessed with this will have success. Let the inquiry of each one be, "What can I do to further the interests of Zion?" and the gates of hell cannot prevail against such a church. The early Church never had any trouble, never began to lose its hold upon the world until there began to be differences of opinion and lack of cooperation among its members. And this has been the history of the Church for more than eighteen hundred years.

5. The spirit of liberality which prevailed was another element of her strength.

And this was developed to a remarkable degree. We are told they sold their possessions and goods, and "distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." And again, "Neither said any of them that aught of the things that he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common." What a wonderful exhibition of the spirit of liberality was this! Doubtless the world has never seen anything like it since. Certainly a religion that could get such a victory over the natural avarice of the human heart must be divine. I do not wonder that fear came upon every soul, as men looked upon the marvelous spectacle. Doubtless this same condition could not obtain in our day, and perhaps it is best that it should not, but the spirit which prompted this community of goods should be ours. A Christian should be a generous man. I think that is a self-evident prop-

osition; one that all men will assent to. There could be no greater contradiction of terms than to speak of a stingy Christian. You might as well talk of a live corpse. The terms refuse to connect themselves in our thought and judgment.

The very spirit of Christianity is one of generosity. It had its birth in the grace of God; it was consummated through the grace of Christ; it is perpetuated through the grace of the Spirit. All of its invitations are without money or price, and the eternal life which it bestows is an unqualified gift. Therefore I say its spirit is one of liberality. No man was ever truly converted who did not become generous. I have no faith in a man's religion whose hallelujahs can be suddenly smothered by the sight of a subscription paper.

These Christians were liberal. They devised liberal things for the cause of their crucified Master, and they had the respect and confidence of the community. Now, I believe that the reason many churches do not succeed is because they are conducted on a narrow basis. There is such a thing as being "penny wise and pound foolish," and I think some churches are in this condition. Take a church where the constant cry is, "How can we reduce our expenses? How can we render less our assessment for benevolent objects?" and it will have no success. It deserves none. "The Lord loveth the cheerful giver" applies to churches as well as to individuals. "The liberal soul shall be made fat" is just as true of the soul of a church as of that of any solitary man or woman. There are

churches to-day with whom God is having the same controversy that he had with the Jews in Malachi's time, when he said, "Ye have robbed me . . . in tithes and offerings," and who will never have prosperity until they obey the divine command—"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse."

6. The joyous spirit which marked their lives was strength.

We are told they "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God." I think this was a great element of their strength; they were a happy people. Everything connected with them and their service partook of the joyous nature. Men looked on and said, "Well, this is queer! These people are largely poor; they are excommunicated from society by the ecclesiastical authorities; they are persecuted and maligned; yet they are happy. There is something strange about this whole matter. I must look into this new religion." And, looking in, they were convinced and saved. I tell you there is a power in a joyous, happy religion that does not exist elsewhere. The prevailing idea among men is that religion is calculated to make men gloomy. Hence they say, "I won't seek it, or go into the Church, because I want to enjoy life." Well, I will confess that I have seen churches and congregations that were well calculated to give men such an impression. I have seen church buildings so gloomy and sepulchral that the most appropriate motto for their walls would be, "How dreadful is this place."

I have seen congregations where everything was in the minor key; the singing was doleful, the praying dismal, and the sermon a second edition of the "Lamentations of Jeremiah." I do not wonder that such churches have no power.

God intends his Church to be a praising Church. How often in the Psalms is the Church commanded to praise the Lord, and to shout aloud for joy; and in how many instances in his dealings with his ancient people did he make their triumphant shout of victory the condition upon which the victory was won! When Jericho was to be taken the people were to shout and the walls were to fall down. When Jeroboam came against Abijah the men of Judah gave a shout, and then the Lord gave them the victory. When the children of Moab came in battle array against Jehoshaphat he consulted with the people and then "he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth forever." And we are told that "when they began to sing and to praise," the Lord made them to triumph. And how full the New Testament is of this subject, and especially the epistles of Paul. They everywhere abound with exhortations to sing and rejoice. Some one has said: "Paul carried around with him a double-barreled gun. He fired off one barrel, and it was, 'Rejoice in the Lord;' and then he fired off the other barrel, and it was, 'And again I say, Rejoice.'" I tell you, what we want is a praising

church! God is honored by the joy of his people. Hence he has made this the great element of their power; for it is distinctly declared, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Show me a joyful church, whose joy is in the Lord, and not in church suppers and entertainments, and I will show you a successful one.

Another element of strength was:

7. Abiding faith in the presence and power of God.

I have left this until the last because it was the chief among their elements of power, and because without this all the other things mentioned are vain. You cannot read the history of this church without feeling that above and beyond them there was an invincible power, and that upon that power was their dependence. From the hour when this mighty power came upon them at Pentecost, when they were "of one accord in one place," and there came tongues of fire from heaven and sat upon each of them, they seem to rest securely in it. If at any time they meet with serious opposition, if to all human appearances their cause seems ready to fail, they simply get together and pray to that unseen power; and immediately the place wherein they are is shaken and they go forth refreshed. They are simply men, ordinary men, with little learning and no social prestige, and yet they go about as kings; yea, they wield a power such as kings know not of. If they are cast into prison they sing and pray a little, and an earthquake batters down their prison walls. If they go to a strange city the people are alarmed,

and say, "These who have turned the world upside down are come hither also." If they go to the metropolis, soon a large bonfire on the street proclaims their victory over the superstition and idolatry of the people. And thus wherever they go a strange, weird power goes with them; one that the world cannot comprehend.

And what was that power? The same that holds worlds in place, the power of Almighty God. Ah, brethren, in estimating the elements of the Church's strength we must not leave God out of the account. Alexander, as he was about to go into an engagement with a much smaller force than his enemy, overheard his staff officers talking discouragingly of the prospect because of the disparity in numbers, and he stepped forth and said, "But, gentlemen, for how many do you count me?" So, before estimating the strength of a true Church, you must determine for how many you will count Almighty God. It seems to me that the great weakness of the Church to-day is a lack of faith in the presence and power of the unseen God. When the Saviour commissioned his disciples, and sent them forth to what seemed an unequal contest, all the apparent inequality was neutralized as he added that thrilling promise, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." It was in the strength of that promise that they went forth; it was in the strength of that present, though unseen, Saviour that their battles were fought and their victories won. Wherever you see them they are calm and self-possessed because they know that success does

not depend upon their feeble efforts alone. Is it not true that the tendency of Christians to-day is to forget this fact? Are we not apt to feel that our success depends largely upon our own strength, upon our surroundings, and the greatness of the efforts we put forth? But God has said that success in his cause is not the result of any of these. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

When the passage through Hell Gate was enlarged, a few years ago, little May Newton, a child only four years of age, held in the arms of her father, touched the wire that produced the great upheaval; and no strong man could have done the work better than she. The power that caused the terrible rending was not in her, it was concealed beneath the waves. And so in the great upheavals which mark the moral world; the power that produces them is not in the human agent but is unseen and divine. All that is needed to make that power available is the touch of faith, and that may be put forth by a little child. And this these early Christians had. They perhaps did not know so much about faith as we—could not define it at such length; but they had the article in its simplicity. O, that we had a more simple trust in God!

> "If our love were but more simple
> We should take him at his word;
> And our lives would be all sunshine
> In the sweetness of our Lord."

It is better to have a faith you cannot define than to be able to define a faith you do not possess. A

philosopher, perhaps, can tell all about the circulation of the blood, but because of disease his blood is stagnant in his veins. Yonder is a child who knows nothing about the philosophy of the matter but at whose every step the blood goes bounding through her veins. It is not difficult to tell which is the happier condition of the two. Sometimes I fear the faith of the Church is too much a matter of dogma and creed and not enough of a living experience. But nothing will take its place as an element of strength. A Church may have all possible human accessories, but without a living faith in God it will not succeed. Such then were the elements of strength in this church. Notice now for a moment,

II. What were the results following upon them? Several are here specified. We will notice only a few.

1. The apostles preached with power.

"With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." Is it any wonder that such should be the case with such a church behind them? It seems to me it would have been impossible for them to have done otherwise. Ah, brethren, there is nothing that so inspires and helps a pastor as the consciousness that behind him is a faithful, earnest, united church. Such a one is well-nigh invincible. And on the other hand, nothing cripples a minister more than to be the mouthpiece of a dead church. I tell you, there are churches in this land who complain of a want of power in the pulpit, and who are constantly crying to the bishop for a man of power, who could

transform that very pulpit into a magazine of dynamite if they would cease their wrangling, get religion, and go to work! If I have had any power in preaching the word in any pulpit during the past years it has been largely due to the fact that a praying, working church has been behind me. God grant that you may ever remain such! Another result was:

2. Fear came upon every soul.

And why should it not? Men always tremble in the presence of any manifestation of divine power. Let a great revival sweep over a community and a spirit of awe will affect the people. A number of years ago an eminent officer in the government of Massachusetts returned from Europe to his home in an inland town in which a great revival was in progress. He had received no intelligence of it. As he passed through the streets the appearance of things seemed strange to him. The countenances of those he met impressed him with a sense of something unusual. The church bells were tolling at an unusual hour. "What has happened here? Something is in the air. Things seem like the day of judgment," was his involuntary comment. But there was no mystery in all this. The power of God was being manifested, and fear had fallen upon the people. And such is the result of the labors of a church that is awake and has put on her strength.

3. They had favor with the people.

Is that possible? Is there not some mistake about that? No; here we have it, "having favor with all the people." But is it not a little strange

that a church in the condition in which we have seen this one to be should have been popular with the people? Surely this does not accord with the general opinion. I think most people would say such a church would be very unpopular. And because of this mistaken impression on the part of men hundreds of churches are being shorn of their strength. They want success in a sense; they are thirsting to be regarded as the popular church; and to secure that end they feel they must compromise with sin; must yield a little to the current of worldliness; must not be too pronounced in their opposition to wrong, nor too earnest in their defense of the right. But a greater mistake was never made in this world. No church ever gained true favor with the people by any such means. The very persons for whose patronage and favor such concessions are made secretly hold such a church in contempt. What the world demands of the Church of God more than anything else is genuineness and sincerity. When is any church most popular with a community? When are its pews most crowded? When are its coffers best filled? When are its members most respected? When it is in the midst of a flaming revival, and its standard of Christian living is at the highest. We have all witnessed the truth of this. A church filled with the Holy Ghost is popular. May God help us as a church to remember this. Hundreds of churches are committing suicide to-day because they have not discovered this fact. Another result was:

4. They had constant accessions.

"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." It was not a spasmodic matter with them. God never designed that all efforts put forth for the salvation of a lost world should be put forth in two months of winter. At all times his power is to be made known through the Church. In the prophecy of Isaiah we have a picture of the normal condition of the Church. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Now if this sign is not with the Church, if souls are not being saved, if such transformations are not going on, there is cause for alarm and inquiry.

Such, then, are the true elements of the Church's strength, and such the results which follow upon their possession. If you are to be successful in your future work as a church these are the things you must enjoy. Nothing will atone for their absence. But it is a blessed truth that all these things you may have freely, without money or price. May God clothe you with power, and may this day date the beginning of increased usefulness on the part of this church. You have now a beautiful church home. May the spiritual temple you are here erecting be as chaste and beautiful. We have looked to-day upon the picture of a true church. May this ever be such a church! Amen, and Amen.

## XI.

## "The Glorious Gospel of Christ."

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."—2 Cor. iv, 4.

## XI.

## "The Glorious Gospel of Christ."*

HOW glorious are all the works of God! Whenever and wherever we look abroad we see

> "The wonders of his hands,
> Or the impress of his feet."

The earth, with all its beautiful covering of verdure and its grandeur of scenery, displays his greatness, goodness and power. The heavens, with all their rich drapery of clouds and many-hued rainbows, display his glory and wisdom; while the firmament, with all its grand expanse of suns, moon and stars, showeth forth his handiwork. In the language of the inspired poet,

> "Day unto day uttereth speech,
> And night unto night showeth knowledge.
> There is no speech nor language,
> Where their voice is not heard."

The very air we breathe, the scenes that we look upon, our own bodies, so fearfully and wonderfully made, all declare the glory of our God and the grandeur of his works. Not only is he glorious in all his works, but also in all his ways. Let us recall for a moment this morning the time when we were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having

* This is the first sermon Dr. Brodbeck ever preached. It was delivered first in Grace Methodist Episcopal Church, Piqua, O., June 23, 1872, and was delivered again, with slight alterations, at Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, Charlestown, Mass., June 27, 1897, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his entrance upon the Christian ministry.

no hope and without God in the world," and how gracious all his dealings with us were; how marvelously he led us, along paths we had not known, until we were brought to the feet of his Son—and there found life, peace and joy in believing. And how gracious were all his dealings with his ancient people—long before the Saviour came into the world. Surely they could say then, and we must say to-day, that "goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life." Who can look upon all these wondrous works, and meditate upon all these marvelous ways, without being led to exclaim, "How manifold and glorious are all thy works and ways, O Lord God Almighty!"

But, grand and glorious as are all these, there is another scene which is more delightful, more sublime to man; there is another subject which is of more importance to us who live in this age than any of these; a subject whose consideration we dare not postpone, for it involves not only our happiness here but also our eternal well-being hereafter; a subject whose claims we dare not disregard, and that is the subject contained in and suggested by my text: "The glorious gospel of Christ." In the thoughts which I may offer upon it I want to inquire into the *nature* of this gospel, its *Author*, and, finally, its *glory* and wherein this consists.

The term "gospel," as used in this connection, I wish to understand in its broadest and most comprehensive sense—in the sense indicated by the etymology of the word itself, namely, good-spell,

or God-spell. I wish to accept it in the sense in which it was comprehended by the heavenly host as they heralded its introduction into the world in that grand anthem of praise, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men;" and as the angel understood who appeared to the shepherds, saying, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people;" and as Christ himself understood it when he said, in the synagogue of Nazareth on the Sabbath day, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." I would therefore understand the term, not as indicating the writings of the evangelists merely, nor any particular portion of Holy Writ, but as comprehending all that is embraced in the great plan of redemption—wherein God can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth on his Son; that grand plan of salvation whereby we, who were born under the curse of a broken law, and have enhanced our guilt by actual transgressions, thereby becoming rebels and outlaws, may yet be restored to the divine favor—made heirs of God, and joint heirs with his Son Jesus Christ. In short, I accept the term as meaning the revelation of a divine Saviour to a lost and ruined world.

Hence it is called the "Gospel of Christ." It is variously named in the Word of God. In several

instances it is spoken of as "The Gospel of God." Again as "The Gospel of the Grace of God," "The Gospel of the Kingdom," "The Gospel of Peace," "The Gospel of Salvation," and sometimes it is described as "The Everlasting Gospel," but most frequently it is termed, as in my text, "The Gospel of Christ." And it is emphatically the "Gospel of Christ." He alone is its author. Hear what St. John has to say on this subject: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Christ is the eternal author of all things, and therefore I say he is the author of this blessed gospel whereby we are saved. It was this same eternal Word, this same blessed Christ, who appeared to our first parents immediately after their fall and delivered unto them the first edition of this gospel in the promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." It was this same eternal Word who inspired the prophets and holy men of olden time, enabling them to predict with such certainty his coming and to portray so faithfully his life of suffering and his tragic death. And it was this same eternal Word who at last introduced and published this gospel to the world, shedding his lifeblood upon the accursed tree, that he might give it merit and efficacy.

But Christ is not only the author, he is also the great subject and center of the gospel. All of its light and glory are derived from him. As the

natural sun is the great center and life-giving power of our vast solar system, so is Christ, the Sun of righteousness, the great center and life-giving power of the gigantic gospel system. Would you behold the great central idea, and the most soul-cheering feature of this glorious gospel of Christ? Would you know what makes it the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes? You need only to go to the little town of Bethlehem of Judea, and there see the babe Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, as in his poverty he lies in the manger in the stable of the inn. You need only to go to Pilate's hall and there look upon the Man of sorrows as, in the dignity of his manhood, he is reviled, mocked, scourged and crowned with thorns. You need only to go to Gethsemane's garden and there see the only begotten Son of God as in his agony he sweats great drops of blood, and cries, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." You need only to go to Calvary's darkened summit and there behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, as suspended between heaven and earth he drinks the bitter cup his Father would not for our sakes remove. He dies that you and I might live.

Here is the great soul-cheering, hope-inspiring feature of the gospel: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." When there was none to pity or to help, when there was no other way in which violated justice could be satisfied and the law made honorable, God "spared not his

own Son, but delivered him up for us all," "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." In the language of the good old prophet, "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Well might the poet sing:

"Love divine, all love excelling!"

Who but God could love like this? O boasting man—boasting in the pride of thine intellect—bring all thy learning, all thy knowledge, together and fathom if thou canst the depth of love so divine!

But Christ is not only the author and center, he is also the great end of the gospel. It is designed to make known Christ, to exalt him before the world, to attract the souls of men unto him, to establish his kingdom, diffuse his glory, and finally to subdue the world unto him. We are told that "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," and so we may say that Christ's glory is augmented by every wanderer who returns to his Father's house; and never will his glory be complete, never will the purpose of his mission to our earth be perfected until the hour shall come when every knee shall bow before his throne, and every tongue shall confess his right to rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of the gospel. Let us now for a few moments consider its glory.

1. It is glorious in itself considered, and in the nature of its author.

The term "glorious," as it is used to-day, has several significations. It is sometimes used to express or describe that which is luminous; as, "the sun is glorious." In this sense how applicable it is to the gospel of Christ, so full of celestial splendor, this gospel which is the light of the world and which shines upon every human being born into the world to lead him from this abode of sin and sorrow to that home of eternal blessedness beyond the skies. It is also used to describe that which is strong and great in opposition to that which is weak and small; as, "the oak, the glory of the forest; the cedar, the glory of Lebanon." In this sense how applicable the term is to the gospel of Christ. Like the mighty oak that has withstood the storms of centuries, resisting and defying their mighty blasts—each successive attack only making it the stronger, sinking its roots deeper and deeper into the earth and sending its branches higher and higher—so this glorious gospel has for ages withstood the storms and blasts of infidelity; each renewed attack only sinking it deeper and deeper into the hearts of men, and sending its branches higher and wider until to-day in its benign influences it covers the face of the whole earth.

It is furthermore used to express that which is rich and magnificent; as, "the temple of Solomon was glorious." And here again how applicable it is to the gospel of Christ: that gospel which is so full of the treasures of the goodness and wisdom of God; that gospel which is compared to gold, to fine gold and costly pearls; that gospel which you and I,

in our own experience, have found to be so full of the unsearchable riches of grace. Furthermore, its author is glorious. Christ is everywhere described in the word of God as being the most glorious of all intelligences: as possessing a glory exceeding the glory of all created beings; a glory far exceeding the glory of angels and archangels. He is said to be not only the glory of his Father, but the very "brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." And to this his only begotten child, this gospel of his, he has imparted at least the reflection of his glory. It is an old principle that "like begets like," and one that is applicable here. Hence we say it is glorious because of the glory of its author. Furthermore,

2. It is glorious to us in the discoveries which it reveals.

It reveals to us our true condition. It tells us that we are sinners in the sight of God; that we are lost, helpless, and undone; that of ourselves we can do nothing, and if left to ourselves we must die in our sins and spend an endless eternity in woe and misery. But it does not leave us in this wretched condition. It goes on, and reveals to us the infallible remedy for our lost estate. It points us to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It tells us that there is a balm in Gilead; that a mighty Physician is there. And it does not stop here, but it tells us of the freeness and fullness of the remedy. It reveals a salvation as broad as the race, as full as the necessities of our case demand, and as free as the water of the springs

at the wayside. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," is the blessed invitation which comes to man; an invitation full and free.

But it does not stop at this point. It tells us also of the mode of application. "Look, and live," "Wash, and be clean," "Believe, and be saved," are the simple commands. No merit of our own is required; no goodness on our part; but simple faith in Him who has suffered all, done all, and now stands willing, ready, and able to save us. In addition to all this,

3. It is glorious in its adaptation to the wants of our natures. In the first place, in its adaptation to our physical nature.

It tells us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made physically. It reveals to us the great and sublime truth that even our bodies are sacred in God's sight. That he designed them to be beautiful temples for his own indwelling; that he demands they be kept clean and holy, and has declared that he will destroy him who defiles these temples. This gospel lays down rules for our daily living which, if obeyed, will be to the health and strengthening of all our physical forces. It encourages us to cultivate all the manly and womanly physical graces and virtues. It reveals to us that, although all these physical powers must weaken and decay, yet the hour is coming when this mortal must put on immortality, when this corruptible must put on

incorruption, and when these earthly bodies shall be made like unto Christ's glorified, heavenly body. Thus it stamps these physical natures of ours with a dignity and glory second only to that which it puts upon the spiritual.

But, again, it is glorious in its adaptation to our mental natures. And if it is glorious in its adaptation to our physical organism, how much more so here.

Man is by nature an inquisitive being: ever reaching above and beyond himself, never satisfied, a lover of mystery, a mystery himself. There is scarcely anything in created matter that has escaped this propensity of his being. He dives into the bosom of the deep and brings to light its hidden mysteries. He plunges into the very heart of the earth and reveals to us its wealth of hidden treasures. He even ascends among the celestial bodies and tells us of their magnitude, distance and course. He has torn the lightning from the clouds and made it do his bidding. He has chained the steam in bands of iron and steel and made it execute his will. And to-day he has even laid his hands upon the clouds, and tells us with unerring certainty from whence they come and whither they go. Now all this is right, and as God designed it to be. He endowed his favorite creature, man, with powers and faculties which are godlike in their nature. He created him in his own likeness and gave him these powers, so susceptible of cultivation and improvement, that he might use and improve them and thereby glorify his Creator. It

is not the use, but the abuse of these powers, the prostitution of them to unworthy purposes, that constitutes sin. So long as they are used in proper channels, in legitimate enterprises, all is right, and we are to entertain a noble ambition to rise higher and higher, and to know more and more of God and his works.

If this be true, where can anything be found that offers so fine a field, so rare opportunity for the exercise and development of these heaven-born powers, as is presented to us in this gospel of God's dear Son? Are you a lover of poetry? Here is the richest, the most sublime poetry that ever emanated from the mind or pen of man. Are you an admirer and student of law? Here is the grandest, the most complete code of laws ever delivered to the world. Are you a devotee of science? When was science ever fraught with such thrilling interest as when impregnated and illuminated by gospel truth? Are you a lover of nature? When did nature ever appear so beautiful as when clothed with the radiance and glory of gospel light? Are you a worshiper of the pure and beautiful? Where can you find so many objects presented that are worthy of your supreme adoration as in this glorious gospel? Here is revealed a God of love and mercy; a Saviour of infinite tenderness and compassion; and a blessed Holy Spirit to be a constant guide and companion. Here is revealed a home of superlative purity and beauty, a city whose very streets are of gold, whose walls and gates are of rubies and pearls; a city whose builder and maker is God.

Surely the gospel presents the grandest facilities, the strongest inducements for the cultivation of every mental power, of every noble aspiration.

Furthermore, it is glorious in its adaptation. And by our moral natures I mean the inner life of every human being; that life hidden within himself and known and read only by himself.

Who has not experienced the longings and cravings of that inner life, the yearnings of the immortal soul? And who has not experienced the utter insufficiency of all earthly things to satisfy these longings? Men in all ages of the world have sought to satisfy the wants of that inner life in some other than the only and proper way. Some have sought this satisfaction in the road to fame. They have struggled long and well, labored constantly and severely, and have succeeded. They have reached the topmost round of the ladder, have been crowned with laurels and received the applause of a nation, and yet they have turned sadly away from it all. There yet remained an aching void which none of these things could fill. Others have sought this satisfaction in the road to wealth, vainly hoping that the gratification of every desire which that would secure to them would satisfy these yearnings. They have toiled day and night like the slave, have sacrificed comfort, ease, health itself, in order to accomplish their purpose; and they have succeeded. They have accumulated wealth, have been surrounded by every luxury that wealth could command. Yet they have turned away from it all, and said, "Van-

ity of vanities! All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

Others have sought this peace and rest in the pleasures of the world. They have given a loose rein to every passion, have plunged into every pool of dissipation, flung themselves with perfect recklessness into every kind of fashionable amusement and dizzy enjoyment; they have drunk the cup of worldly pleasure to its very dregs; yet at the last they have turned away disgusted, satiated, sick, and faint, and in the agony of remorse and humiliation have bitterly cried, "Where, O where, can my weary soul find rest?" To all such I come to-day and offer the rest they so much need. Here is a satisfying portion; here is bread and wine; here is that which alone can meet the wants of immortal beings.

Are you sick and faint? Here is a panacea for every ill. Are you bruised and wounded? Here is a balm for every wound. Are you sorrowing because of a life wasted, and your present cheerless, hopeless condition? Come to the gospel feast, come, ever knowing,

"Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal."

Are you hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Come to this feast of love; eat and be filled; drink deeply from the clear crystal waters of the river of life, which proceedeth out from the throne of God and the Lamb forever. Are you longing for a higher, a better life? Come to this gospel; the only true source of light and knowledge, the only true guide to purity and holiness.

But, again, it is glorious in the influence it imparts.

It imparts a holy influence, changing the heart, renewing the mind, making us like our Master, who is holy. It imparts a happy influence, causing us to rejoice with a joy unspeakable and full of glory. It imparts an elevating influence. It stoops down to the low regions of despair into which we have fallen, and lifts us to that sublime level designed for us by a kind and beneficent Creator. It imparts a supporting and sustaining influence, which is as a staff to our steps, and which holds us up in the midst of trials and cares and carries us through every dark and mysterious providence. For we know that "He doeth all things well;" and that all these dark experiences must work together for our good because we love him.

And, finally, it is glorious in its revelations as to the future.

It reveals to the tempest-tossed mariner a glorious haven; to the homeless wanderer a blessed home; to the weary pilgrim a delightful repose "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest;" and to all of us poor, dying mortals, to us who know that the time and places which now know us shall soon know us no more forever, to us who know that this house of our earthly tabernacle must soon be dissolved, that this dust must return to dust—to us it reveals a glorious resurrection and, beyond that, an endless life amid the glories and rejoicings of the unseen world.

Thanks be unto God for the glorious gospel of Christ! This is the blessed gospel which it has been my privilege to preach to my dying fellow-men for a quarter of a century. This is the gospel which I am trying to preach unto you of Trinity Church. I come not to you with cunningly devised fables, but with a glorious reality. I come not with beautifully written essays, finely spun theories, or elaborately drawn arguments; but I come bringing to you the everlasting gospel, the glorious gospel of the Son of God. I come carrying in my hands this blessed book of books, and offer it to you as a guide to your path, a lamp to your feet. That was a beautiful simile made use of by one of the celebrated divines not long ago when speaking of this blessed volume. Said he: "The Bible is a different book to me now from what it used to be. I used to admire its poetry, and read it as I would read Burns. I admired its code of laws, and read it as I would read Blackstone. I valued it as an historical work, and read it as I would read Josephus. But now, when I take up this blessed book, I take it up as the family album. I open it, and I see the face of my heavenly Father. I turn the page, and I see the face of my elder Brother. I turn again, and I see the face of my Comforter and Friend. I turn once more, and I see a picture of my eternal home, my mansion in the skies."

How true are these words, how precious this family album! This gospel is the only hope of the sinner. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Christ Jesus. There is no

other name given on earth, and among men, whereby we may be saved, save the name of Jesus. This gospel is the joy of the humble believer. He leans upon it, lives by it, and finds his highest joy in obeying its precepts, and receiving its blessings. Dear brethren, have we made this gospel a part of our life? Are all our thoughts, words and actions controlled by it? Is its author to us the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely? This must be our condition if we would be saved, if we would reign with him forever?

My unconverted friend, how is it with you today? Are you still rejecting this blessed Saviour? Are you still refusing to be saved on the easy terms of this gospel? Are you still without hope, and without God in the world? If so, will you not stop and consider? Will you not resolve this morning, God being your helper, that you will reject the Saviour no longer; that you will open wide the door of your heart and let the Saviour come in; that you will be a partaker of the joys and comforts, and the eternal life imparted by this glorious gospel? Receive it; believe it; live by it; cling to it, and all will be well. It will carry you safely through the storms of life; it will bear you triumphantly over the dark river; and at the last it will anchor you safe within the vail. Whatever you lose hold fast to the glorious gospel of Christ.

"The Saviour! O what endless charms
Dwell in that blissful sound!
Its influence every fear disarms,
And spreads delight around.

"Here pardon, life, and joy divine,
In rich effusion flow,
For guilty rebels, lost in sin,
And doomed to endless woe.

"The almighty Former of the skies
Stoops to our vile abode;
While angels view with wondering eyes,
And hail the incarnate God.

"How rich the depths of love divine!
Of bliss a boundless store!
Redeemer, let me call thee mine,
Thy fullness I implore.

"On thee alone my hope relies;
Beneath thy cross I fall;
My Lord, my Life, my Sacrifice,
My Saviour, and my All!"

## XII.

# Twenty-five Years in the Christian Ministry.

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."—Acts xxvi, 22, 23.

## XII.

### Twenty-five Years in the Christian Ministry.

THE words of Paul before Agrippa. Will it be immodest for me to adopt them on this anniversary? I do not wish to boast of anything accomplished, but simply to recognize God's goodness and mercy. Notice, then,

1. My entrance nto the ministry.

I was the son of a Methodist minister. My first serious impressions came in 1863, at Marietta, O. But I did not continue to seek. I was converted March 3, 1866, and united with the church on probation the same evening. Was received into full fellowship August 26, 1866. The question of the ministry was pressed upon me at that time, but I was not obedient to the heavenly vision. This I deeply regret, especially as it led to five years of backsliding. During this time I prepared for the profession of law.

Became actively religious again in the fall of 1871. Labored in revival during the winter of 1872. Was licensed to exhort March 12 of that year. Licensed to preach June 8 of same year. Preached my first sermon June 23 of that year, and my second and third sermons July 7 following. Was received into the Cincinnati Conference September 2, 1872. Was married the 12th of the following November.

2. The churches served during these twenty-five years.

My first appointment was to Tippecanoe City, a

small town in Ohio. The church was repaired and we had two blessed revivals. My second appointment was to Wright Chapel, Cumminsville, O. Here also had a good revival. My next appointment was Avondale, O., one of the aristocratic suburbs of Cincinnati. During two years four joined on probation and twelve by letter. This charge gave me a grand opportunity for study.

My next appointment was to Trinity Church, Xenia, O. Very soon a new parsonage was built and the church repaired. Each year had a good revival interest. Socially, this was a grand appointment; also stimulating intellectually. My next appointment was St. Paul Church, Springfield, O. This was a new enterprise, started by a colony from Central Church in that city. We worshiped for some time in a Tabernacle, but a fine church edifice was built, costing $87,000. During this pastorate had two remarkable revivals; 246 were received on probation and 302 by letter. These letters came from 14 different denominations. We began with 162 members, and when I left there were 579 members; a net gain of 417. My next appointment was at the First Church, Urbana, O. Had here the greatest revival of my ministry; 328 conversions and 254 additions in one year. Also thoroughly repaired the church. On the Sunday before Conference I received 117 into full fellowship.

My next appointment was Walnut Hills, Cincinnati. I was sent there upon the judgment of Bishop Merrill, who presided over our Conference. This was a very important church. During my work

there we had two revivals; 238 were added to the church in twenty months. In that time we also completed and repaired the church edifice at a cost of $6,000. My next appointment was Tremont Street Church, Boston. Here three blessed revivals were enjoyed. There were 733 additions in five years; found 258 members and left 562. My next appointment was at Brookline. During my pastorate there we raised, and paid on the church property, over $90,000, and when I left, at the end of three years, the church edifice was ready for the plastering. The first two years had blessed revivals —165 conversions the first year.

My next appointment was at Trinity Church, Charlestown. You know what has been my record here. During the three years 121 have united on probation and 56 by letter. We have also repaired and beautified our church edifice at a cost of $3,500. During the three years indicated this church has raised more money than in any other three, excepting when the debt was paid. I have never had a word to say about my appointment; never but once about salary. Was elected General Secretary of the Epworth League September 5, 1892. Had nothing to do with that. I have left all my interests in the hands of God.

3. The results achieved during these twenty-five years.

| | |
|---|---|
| Number received on probation | 1,375 |
| " " by letter | 1,085 |
| " professed conversions | 2,000 |
| " funerals attended | 285 |
| " adults baptized | 287 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Number children baptized | 157 |
| " marriages solemnized | 392 |
| " sermons prepared | 566 |
| Amount received for salary | $46,866 67 |
| Amount raised for building and repairing churches and parsonages | 170,000 00 |
| Amount raised for Missions | 21,269 14 |
| " " " Wornout Preachers | 3,450 78 |
| " " " Church Extension | 1,363 03 |
| " " " Freedmen's Aid | 1,307 13 |
| " " " Tract Society | 204 00 |
| " " " Sunday School Union | 206 76 |
| " " " Education | 742 60 |
| " " " Bible Society | 286 16 |
| | $198,829 60 |

4. The changes in our Methodism during these twenty-five years.

| | 1872. | 1897. |
|---|---|---|
| Annual Conferences | 72 | 124 |
| Effective ministers | 9,000 | 14,000 |
| Members and probationers | 1,400,000 | 2,800,000 |
| Sunday school scholars | 1,300,000 | 2,600,000 |
| Church edifices | 13,000 | 26,000 |
| Valued at | $57,000,000 | $109,000,000 |
| Missions | $661,000 | $1,550,000 |
| Total benevolences | $900,000 | $2,000,000 |

The advance made on other lines:

| | 1872. | 1897. |
|---|---|---|
| Hospitals | 0 | 11 |
| Orphanages | 2 | 9 |
| Homes for aged | 1 | 6 |
| Deaconess homes | 0 | 45 |
| Deaconesses | 0 | 450 |
| Epworth League chapters | 0 | 18,000 |
| Epworth League members | 0 | 1,600,000 |
| Woman's Home Missionary Soc'y | 0 | $180,000 |
| City Mission and Church Extension Societies | 0 | 9 |

From no Chautauqua Circles in 1872 there were in 1897 thousands of Reading Circles and many summer assemblies.

5. What of the future of this ministry?

With Paul I can say, "Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day." The next twenty-five years ought to be my prime. I want my work to be better. I want to keep abreast of the age. The character of preaching has changed. Methods have changed. There has been a great change in the methods of doing business, and there are changes just as great in methods of Christian work. The Church must adapt itself to new conditions. The ministry must be alive and progressive. To this end and work I give myself anew this day. May God help me to be faithful to my great trust. Whatever may come, this shall be my purpose—

"His only righteousness I show,
His saving truth proclaim:
'Tis all my business here below,
To cry, 'Behold the Lamb!'

"Happy, if with my latest breath
I may but gasp his name;
Preach him to all, and cry in death,
'Behold, behold the Lamb!'"